THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

It has often been said—and rightly said—that the art of teaching lies far more in knowing the right questions to ask than in knowing all the answers. This is particularly relevant in the case of the book which lies before us—*Steps to Christian Understanding*, edited by Mr. R. J. W. Bevan.[1] This book was written 'to explain the Christian Faith for the benefit especially of young people, such as those in Sixth Forms and Technical Schools, in one of which the editor teaches'. The team which has been collected is indeed distinguished—W. R. Matthews, S. H. Hooke, C. A. Coulson, S. P. T. Prideaux, Percy Harthill, Nathaniel Micklem, Henry Balmforth, Norman Snaith, David Cairns, Herbert Butterfield, J. E. Fison, F. W. Dillistone. The book is in three parts—Part I: God and the World, which is sub-divided into Science and Religion, The Biblical Story of Creation and Modern Science, God the Creator; Part II, which is sub-divided into The Idea of Revelation in Religion, The Christian View of Man, God in History; Part III, which is sub-divided into The Person of Jesus Christ, The Holy Spirit, Belief in the Holy Trinity, The Christian Hope. There is a final essay on The Place of Understanding.

Now we return to our initial comment. Amidst this feast of riches and this galaxy of talent one chapter stands out; that is the first chapter by Dr. W. R. Matthews on Thinking about Religion. It is here that the questions are stated; and seldom can they have been stated better, or the lines of the answers more briefly and more skilfully sketched and indicated.

If one thinks of religion, one must define religion. Schleiermacher saw religion as a 'feeling of absolute dependence', the increasing conviction that we are not 'masters of our fate' and 'captains of our soul'. Otto held that the essence of religion is in 'the sense of the Numinous', which is indefinable, but which animates the idol-worshipper and the saint alike.

No one will deny the suggestiveness and the validity of these definitions, but they both leave out one thing—belief. What is the essential belief of religion? The answer can only be—Belief in God. But here we are at once face to face with problems. Christianity is not the only religion. Are we then to expect revelation about God in the Scriptures and the beliefs of other religions? It is demonstrable that belief in God has been a development; there has been a developing and progressive revelation, or grasp of revelation. Are we to believe that Christianity is *sui generis*, the absolute and final religion and revelation? Or is it merely one of the great religions, or is there more to come? The 'History of Religions' school would regard Christianity as very probably the highest religion, but none the less as a stage in the process of evolution and at least in part to be explained by that process. The Barthian school would hold that the sole task of the Christian thinker and theologian and devotee is to explain the revelation already given in Jesus Christ. Dr. Matthews points out that in fact there are other religions; and a study of other religions can be helpful, for it may well confirm the uniqueness of Christianity 'if it could be shown that the spiritual quests of all religions find in it their fulfilment'.

But another question arises—Is religious experience merely a kind of 'persistent illusion' as the Freudian school would hold? The Christian answering proposition is that 'religious experience is experience of something, or of Someone, and that there is a Reality which calls out the experience; in short that religion is a response and not a purely subjective aberration of the human mind'. If religion is response, it must be a response to something or Someone which or who already exists.

Is it then reasonable to believe in God? The Christian apologists have to face the Logical Positivists, who would hold that the sentences 'God exists', or 'God does not exist' are literally nonsense, because, they hold, nothing has any meaning which cannot be verified or disproved by some sense experience. Quite obviously, the statement 'God is' cannot be thus verified. The Logical Positivist is condemned out of his own mouth.

[1] Oxford University Press; 15s. net.

If the absolute sceptic says : ' I know that I can know nothing ', that very statement contradicts itself. ' In much the same way anyone who says : " All statements which cannot be verified by some sense experience are non-sense ", may be invited to point to any such experience which could verify that statement.' The ultimate position of the Logical Positivist is self-contradiction.

But we must go on to ask—What arguments are there to help to show that it is reasonable to believe in God ? Dr. Matthews swiftly sketches the great classical arguments. There is the *ontological* argument, which argues ' from the idea of God in the mind to the reality of God '. There is the *cosmological* argument, which insists that the world is not self-explanatory, and which shows that, if we go on asking questions long enough, the last question leads back to Eternal Mind. Science can answer a great many questions, and will no doubt in time answer a great many more, but it cannot answer the question *why* there is anything at all, *why* there is a universe. Sometimes this argument is presented as an argument for a First Cause. There is the *teleological* argument. It argues that there is design in the world, and that design indicates purpose, and purpose necessitates a creator. Evolution does not destroy that argument. There is evolution of *mind* as well as physical evolution, a fact which strongly suggests ' the purposive direction of Creative Mind '. There is the argument which is in many ways the most compelling of all—the *moral* argument. The sense of right and wrong, the sense of duty, can be used as an argument for an Eternal Good, for God. If it be argued that the sense of obligation is merely a useful kind of psychological mistake arising from social evolution, then the moral argument cannot be held. In order to hold the moral argument we ' must take moral experience seriously and as having authority which we cannot disregard '.

Having sketched these arguments, Dr. Matthews wisely goes on to remind us that ' it hath not pleased the Lord to save His people by dialectic ', and that there remains an essential element of *faith*. It is precisely this that made Hume declare that Christianity is irrational. But the fact is that men of supreme faith have often been men of supreme intellectual acuteness in the defence of their faith by argument. It has always to be remembered that in the New Testament faith is a many-sided word. It is not the same for John and Paul. It always involves, as part of itself, assent to a proposition or propositions, although it is far more than intellectual assent. It is not in any event a purely religious phenomenon. Every day life demands faith in ' the order of nature, the stability of our society and the trustworthiness of friends '. Even science has to have faith in the intelligibility of Nature, when appearances are in fact all against it. Finally, faith is a confidence in life and reality which can and does often lead to heroic action.

Religious faith is distinguished from reason, in the narrower sense of the term, ' by being an activity of the whole personality, in which feeling, imagination, and will are involved, and not the activity of the intellect alone '. It is best exemplified and illustrated in our relationship to persons. It is with our whole self that we respond to any person.

Hence, as Dr. Matthews sees it, we are left with the final paradox : ' We have to think for ourselves and employ our own reason ; we have to believe and have faith for ourselves, for we cannot live by another's faith. We are, it appears, responsible for our reasoning and our faith ; and yet, if we believe in God, we must also believe that every good gift comes from Him, and that our power to reason is dependent on His will and our faith is not our own achievement but the working of God's grace.'

This book is well worth reading for this masterly opening chapter alone, and, if we proceed further into it, we will find that, although, as in the case of all composite works, the contributions are not all of equal value, there is none which has not something useful to say to any audience.

Over all the pages of the New Testament looms the Cross of Christ. For humble believers it is the accepted symbol of their faith. Its significance and power in human life is evident, but how are we to explain that power ? No offered explanation has proved really satisfactory, and theologians in every generation return to the theme. Professor John Knox of Union Theological Seminary, New York, takes it up once again in a robust and forthright book entitled *The Death of Christ : The Cross in New Testament History and Faith*.[1] It is divided into three parts : the first examines critically the historical facts about the death of Jesus ; the second seeks to determine what may be known of the attitude of Jesus Himself to His death ; and the third expounds the Cross in the faith of the Early Church.

For Professor Knox it is the third part which is of first importance, though it may well be the earlier chapters which provoke most comment.

[1] Collins ; 12s. 6d. net.

This is because he finds himself driven to adopt an attitude of extreme scepticism towards the historicity of much that is reported in the Gospels. These, he argues, are the product of the faith of the Church, and give us reliable information about that Faith, but cannot be trusted to retain accurate historical records. Critical scholars have long recognized that the thoughts of a later generation have affected the way the narrative of the Gospels is presented, but they felt able to assume its historicity, except where it could be shown to be inaccurate. Professor KNOX, however, reverses this standpoint, and insists that now we cannot regard anything as historical until it has been substantiated as an historical fact.

In Part I three strong motives are ascribed to the evangelists which led them to distort the story of the Cross. *Firstly*, they wish it to be understood as an event of momentous significance in contemporary history, whereas, in fact, it was probably for the authorities a trivial, routine affair, which Pontius Pilate would have no recollection of as a separate event. Its importance for faith has led to an exaggeration of its significance in history. *Secondly*, the responsibility of the Romans for the Crucifixion is minimised, and that of the Jews exaggerated. 'And yet the unassailable fact was that Jesus had been crucified by the Romans, and not stoned by the Jews'. *Thirdly*, the writers are at pains to show that there was no political significance in the death of Jesus, whereas in fact there must have beeen sufficient similarity between aspects of His teaching and that of the Zealots for Him to be regarded by the Romans, even if mistakenly, as politically dangerous to them.

Professor KNOX wishes readers to be aware of these distortions, though he does not claim to be able to discern clearly the genuinely historical facts which lie behind them. 'How the line should be drawn in the Passion narratives between the originally remembered facts and the contribution of primitive imagination and faith, we shall never be able to determine with any precision or certainty'.

In Part II the attitude of Jesus Himself to His death is considered. The historical reliability of His relevant sayings is examined, and particularly those which imply that He thought of Himself as the Christ, or the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, or the Son of Man. He sharply challenges those who have claimed that it was the unique insight of Jesus which first brought these concepts together in relation to Himself. This must have been the work of the Church.

It is felt to be incredible that Jesus should have thought of Himself as either Messiah or Suffering Servant; and the only references to the Son of Man, which can confidently be attributed to Jesus Himself, are those which regard the Son of Man as an apocalyptic figure coming down from heaven, as he is represented in the Book of Enoch. It is doubted, however, whether Jesus thought of this heavenly being as identifiable with Himself. Such lofty thoughts about Jesus come from the Church, not from Jesus Himself. 'Such an understanding of his destiny is compatible with the theology—and the psychology—of the Church. But is it compatible with the mental health of the man Jesus?'

This query may seem to reflect on the author's thought of Jesus as the Son of God, but Professor KNOX vigorously rebuts any aspersion of this kind. During the earthly life, however, the Incarnation was wholly real, and this 'authentic humanity' of our Lord is very precious to the author. He writes moving words about it: 'If by being "more than a man" we mean that he lacked the normal self-consciousness of a man, then we are saying that he was less than a man. . . . We cannot think of him as *knowing* he was more than a man without denying that he was man at all—that is, a true, sane man'.

This is well said, but, we may ask, is there not a real danger of so reducing Jesus to the level of *ordinary* man that we completely fail to catch any glimpse of that strange and unaccountable Man, of whom the Early Church felt itself driven to make such high and lofty affirmations?

In Part III Professor KNOX asks: 'How can we describe and understand the place of the Cross in the actual existence of the primitive community?' He insists, however, that the Cross must not be isolated from the life and the Resurrection. These together make up the total Christ event, of which the Cross is the vivid symbol.

The various theories of the Atonement are divided into three main types, which are characterised by their emphasis on Christ's victory, or His sacrifice, or His revelation of God. The first two of these are fully representative of the New Testament, and both are found in Paul, Hebrews, the Johannine writings, and 1 Peter. In the Cross are to be found both 'triumph' over demonic forces of evil and 'expiation' for man's sin. In the Gospels, too, is this twofold emphasis: 'As Son of Man He has overcome our enemies and set us free; as Servant He has atoned for our guilt and reconciled us to God'. Both

these theories, however, are shown to be logically untenable, as is also the third, the Moral Influence theory, which has the further weakness of receiving no support from the New Testament. So the question is asked: 'Are the conceptions to be rejected as unilluminating and untrue?' By no means. They are 'dramatic ways of expressing meanings of the whole event of Christ'. If not logically accurate, they are nevertheless 'existentially' significant. 'As helpless sinners (which we are) we need *deliverance*. As responsible sinners (which we also are) we need *forgiveness*. This is our existential situation, and the New Testament doctrine of the work of Christ answers to it'.

A final chapter considers the similarity of this approach to that associated with the name of Bultmann, and criticises at the same time the inadequacy of his view of the resurrection of Christ. 'For him the resurrection is to be understood as "pure myth", as an attempt to convey the meaning of the Cross', 'nothing else than the rise of faith in the risen Lord'. Knox, however, asserts that 'there can be no doubt as to the objective character of that occurrence, if the resurrection of Jesus, the coming of the Spirit, and the creation of the Church are recognized as being three ways of referring to the same occurrence. Even this seems curiously different from the orthodox understanding of the resurrection of Jesus.

This book is a bold attempt to be ruthlessly honest about the central theme of the Faith. It is eminently readable, and never dull, and if it is provoking and sometimes disconcerting, it is also stimulating and invigorating, though, we should think, unduly sceptical about the possibility of gaining knowledge of the 'authentic' human life of Jesus, and somewhat lacking in a sense of the importance for our faith of such knowledge.

Great Themes of the New Testament

V. Revelation xiii. (*continued*)

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In *v.* 5 we read that the power which was given to the Beast which came from the sea was to last *forty and two months*. This is a figure which occurs in the Revelation in more than one form. It occurs in the same form as here in 11^2; in 12^6 it occurs in the form of a thousand two hundred and threescore days; and in 12^{14} it occurs in the form of a time, and times and half a time. The last of these phrases is from Dn 7^{25} and it is common in apocalyptic imagery. It is the common extent of a period of limited but intense suffering. Its origin comes from the sorest time of terror which ever descended on the Jewish nation. In the first half of the second century B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes made a quite deliberate attempt to wipe out Jewish religion. He was a lover of all things Greek, and he considered himself an apostle of Greek culture. It was further the fact that Israel lay precisely between his own kingdom of Syria and that of his deadly and bitter rival Egypt, and the subjugation of Israel would naturally have aided his designs against Egypt. Antiochus Epiphanes descended on Israel. There followed a time when even to possess a copy of the Law, and even to circumcise a child, was a crime punishable by death. The Temple was desecrated, the priests' chambers were turned into public brothels, the great altar of the burnt-offering was turned into an altar to Zeus, and the Temple courts were defiled by the offering of swine's flesh and the pouring out on them of swine's blood. History has seldom seen such a deliberate attempt to obliterate a nation's faith. It was then that Judas Maccabaeus and the rest of his heroic family arose; and after a bitter struggle against incredible odds the Jews regained their liberty. The point of this apocalyptic reference is that the desecration of the Temple lasted from June 168 B.C. to December 165 B.C. The restoration and the purification of the Temple is still celebrated by the Jews in the Feast of Hanukah, which falls at the same time as the Christian Christmas. This is to say that that never-to-be forgotten desecration of the Temple lasted for almost exactly three and a half years. Forty-two months and a thousand two hundred and threescore days are the same as three and a half years. A time, times and half a time means a year, two years and half a year, once again giving the period three and a half years. The time of desecration during the invasion of Antiochus Epiphanes had so burned itself into the minds

and the memories of the Jewish nation that it came to be used regularly to denote the period of terror, under the sway of demonic evil, before the final ending of history came.

Verse 10 is a curious verse. The meaning is that in the time of intense terror and evil which is coming human resistance is of no avail. The world is beyond cure, it is in the ineluctable grip of evil; at such a time nothing but steadfast endurance can avail. The struggle is not a human struggle; it is a struggle between God and the devil; and those who have to go through it can only endure until the end comes, and their vindication follows. Human participation in this struggle consists only in waiting upon God.

In *v.* 11 another beast emerges, this time a beast from the land. It is said of this beast from the land that it exercises all the power of the first beast, which came from the sea, and that it causes men to worship the first beast. We have seen that the first beast represents the power of Rome, and in particular the Cæsar-worship which that power propagated and on which it insisted. This Cæsar-worship was highly organized in each province. It was organized into communes or presbyteries or dioceses, with priests and officials and a powerful and effective administration. The beast from the land represents the provincial organization for the spread and the enforcement of Cæsar-worship. The beast from the land is the complement, the agent, the instrument of the beast from the sea, and it represents the local organization through which Cæsar-worship operated within the province.

Verses 14–16 speak about the image of the beast, and about wonders connected with it. The expression of devotion to the image of the Emperor was something which was well known. Tacitus tells of the ceremony, when Corbulo had defeated Tiridates, and had thus avenged the surrender of the Roman legions. 'It was then arranged that Tiridates should place the ensign of royalty beneath the image of Cæsar, and only receive it again from the hand of Nero. . . . A few days afterwards there was a grand review of the two armies. On one side were the Parthian cavalry, drawn up in their squadrons, and under their national ensigns; on the other stood the Roman legions, with their eagles and standards glistening and with the images of their gods set up as in a temple. Between the two armies was a tribunal, supporting a curule chair; and on the chair was the effigy of Nero. The customary sacrifices having been offered, Tiridates advanced, took the diadem off his head, and laid it at the feet of the effigy' (Tacitus, *Annals*, xv. 29 [G. G. Ramsay's translation]). Here we have an example of the image of the Emperor literally standing for the Emperor, and of a fallen foe doing obeisance to the image.

This is precisely the kind of thing which our verses imply. As for the wonders connected with the image—the fire, the miracles, the apparent life, the speaking voice—the priests of the ancient cults were skilled in producing life-like effects by the use of ventriloquism and mechanical apparatus and all kinds of jugglery. The provincial Cæsar-worship organization would have no difficulty in seeing to it that the imperial images produced startling and life-like effects.

Verse 16 goes on to tell how those who accept and worship and submit to the beast receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead. The idea of some kind of mark, as in some sense indicating ownership or allegiance, was very common in the ancient world.

Slaves were sometimes branded with a mark of ownership. This was specially so, if the slave had been a runaway, for in that case he was branded on the forehead with the letters FUG which stand for *fugitivus*, which means *runaway*. So often did this happen that slaves were sometimes with a grim punning jest called *literati, the lettered ones*. History has one grim example of the branding of captives. After their disastrous defeat under Nicias in the Sicilian campaign certain of the Athenians who were taken captive were branded on the forehead with the sign of a galloping horse, which was the Sicilian emblem (Plutarch, *Nicias*, 29). The sign of ownership and subjection was branded on them. Ambrose says of slaves that they were 'inscribed with the seal of their master' (*De Obit. Valentin.*, 58).

There is some evidence that soldiers were branded on the hand with the name of their general. These marks are generally called *stigmata*. Aelian says that soldiers bear their *stigmata* on their hands: and Ambrose goes on to say that soldiers are signed with the name of their general. It has been suggested that this was in Paul's mind when he said that he bore in his body the *stigmata* of Christ (Gal 6^{17}), and that he may have been calling himself thereby the *miles Christi*, the soldier of Christ.

There is definite evidence that devotees of gods were branded with the symbol of the god whom they worshipped. The account in 3 Maccabees tells how Ptolemy IV Philopator decreed that 'all Jews should be degraded to the lowest rank, and to the condition of slaves; and that those who spoke against it should be taken by force and put to death; and that these when they were registered should be marked with a brand on their bodies with the ivy-leaf, the emblem of Bacchus' (3 Mac $2^{28.\ 29}$).

To bear the mark of a person would mean either

that one belonged to that person, as a slave or a soldier, or that one was devoted to that person, as the worshipper of a god.

In the Old Testament we read of sacred marking. The Jews are forbidden to cut themselves, and this seems to be prohibition of sacred protective marking, which distinguished people as being under the protection of some god (Lv 19^{28} 21^{5}, Dt 14^{1}). Cain has a mark put upon him in order that he may not be slain (Gn 4^{15}). In Ezekiel the faithful are marked upon the forehead before the avenging wrath is let loose (Ezk 9^{1-4}). Thus the mark would mean that the person was under the protection of the god. In our present passage of the Revelation this mark of the beast may be a grim and blasphemous parody of the protective sealing of the faithful in 7^{1-3}. Just as God has those who bear His mark so Satan has those who bear his.

Before we leave this conception of the mark, we may cite two further things which shed light on it. Deissmann has pointed out (*Light from the Ancient East*, 344f) that it was the custom to impress on deeds of sale and similar documents a stamp containing the name of the Emperor and the year of his reign; that stamp is actually called a *charagma*, which is the very word the Revelation here uses. This would mean that those who bear the mark of the beast have the seal of their Satanic Emperor upon them. Such imperial stamps have been found dating back to A.D. 48.

There is one curious third or fourth century papyrus letter (*P.Oxy.* 1680) from a son to his father Apollo. Father and son are for the time being separated, times are dangerous and unsettled, and the son fears that something may happen to the father. He writes: 'Dearest father, I pray to the god for your prosperity and success and that we may receive you home in good health. I have indeed told you before of my grief at your absence from among us, and my fear that something dreadful might happen to you and that we may not find your body. Indeed I often wish to tell you that having regard to the insecurity I wanted *to stamp a mark* upon you'. The verb used is ἐνχαράξαι, the verb with which χάραγμα is connected. Here the idea is clearly that of an identifying mark—perhaps a tattoo mark—by which the body may be known. Even so, those who belong to the beast are marked with a mark which identifies them as his.

Verse 17 declares that in the time of terror things would be ordered in such a way that only those who had the mark of the beast would be able to engage in the ordinary business and affairs of life. It was not indeed to be long before the Christian found many a trade or profession either impossible for him or barred to him. Later Tertullian in his *On Idolatry* was to deal with this very problem. Any craftsman—the mason, the builder, the carpenter, the tailor, the wood-carver, the metal-worker, the scribe—might suddenly find himself involved in work connected with a heathen temple or with heathen worship. Many such workers asked how they could possibly give up their work and still make a living. But Tertullian insists that the Lord's sayings are 'examples which take away all excuse'. 'What is it that you say? "I shall be in need". But the Lord calls the needy "happy". "I shall have no food". But "think not", says He, "about food". And as for an example of clothing, we have the lilies. "My work was my subsistence". Nay, but, "all things are to be sold, and divided to the needy". "But provision must be made for children and posterity". "None putting his hand on the plough, and looking back is fit for work". "But I was under contract". "No one can serve two masters". . . . Parents, wives, children have to be left behind for God's sake'. The problem of the Christian's exclusion from the business and social life of the community was to be very real.

At that stage it was still a voluntary exclusion; it was a case of the Christian demonstrating, as Tertullian put it, that 'faith does not fear famine'. But the time was to come when the exclusion was to be much more radical. Early in A.D. 250 Decius issued his edict against Christianity. Provincial governors and magistrates, assisted by local committees of prominent citizens, were to see to it that on a certain fixed day all men sacrificed to the gods and to the genius of the Emperor, and tasted the sacrifices. Thereafter they would receive a certificate that they had done so. Such a certificate runs: 'To the superintendents of offerings and sacrifices at the city from Aurelius . . . thion son of Theodorus and Pantonymis, of the said city. It has ever been my custon to make sacrifices and libations to the gods, and now also in your presence I have in accordance with the command poured libations and sacrificed and tasted the offerings together with my son Aurelius Dioscurus and my daughter Aurelia Lais. I therefore request you to certify my statement. The first year of the Emperor Cæsar Gaius Messius Quintus Trajanus Decius Pius Felix Augustus, Pauni 20' (*P. Oxy.* 658: other examples in H. B. Workman, *Persecution in the Early Church*, 341; and in *A. S. Hunt and G. C. Edgar, Select Papyri*, ii. 352–355). The time was to come when, unless a man possessed that certificate, he was cut off from all ordinary life, and faced with imprisonment,

banishment and death. Such a certificate in the time to come might well seem the mark of the beast.

Finally, we come to the most fascinating problem in this chapter of problems. In *v.* 18 we are told that the number of the beast is 666; it is to be noted that there is an alternative reading 616; but the first reading is certainly correct. This is to say, that the person who is the apotheosis of evil is concealed in the number 666. Here we come on a phenomenon called *ἰσοψηφία*. The basis of this *ἰσοψηφία* is in the fact that Greek has no numerals, and that the letters of the alphabet each have a numerical value. Therefore, any series of letters may form a word and may also form a number. This *ἰσοψηφία* had many manifestations. To begin with the very simplest of them, there exists a scribbled piece of writing on the walls of Pompeii: 'I love her whose number is 545' (A. Deissmann, *ib.*, 276). The lover identifies—and conceals—his love by adding up the numerical value of the letters in her name! When the John of the Revelation symbolized the beast under a number, he was using a method with which even scribblers on walls were perfectly familiar.

It must be noted here and now at the beginning that this custom existed not only among the Greeks but also among the Hebrews in the form of *gematria*. To take an example the Hebrew word נחש, which means *serpent* has the same numerical value as the Hebrew word משיח which means *Messiah*; it was thus argued that *serpent* is one of the titles of the Messiah; and it is further suggested that this may have some relation to the fact that the New Testament says that Moses lifted up the *serpent* in the wilderness (Jn 3^{14}). So to the Jews also this method of identification and concealment was perfectly familiar.

Ἰσοψηφία was not infrequently used in matters of religion. The god Thouth was known by the number 1218, because that is the numerical value of his name; $\theta=9$; $\omega=800$; $\upsilon=400$; $\theta=9$: Total 1218. Jupiter or Zeus was known as 717, because one of his titles is *ἡ ἀρχη* and 717 is the numerical value of that phrase—$\eta=8$; $\alpha=1$; $\rho=100$; $\chi=600$; $\eta=8$: Total 717. One of the commonest words on amulets is *αβρασαξ* or *αβραξας*. The reason is that the sum of these letters is 365—$\alpha=1$; $\beta=2$; $\rho=100$; $\alpha=1$; $\xi=60$; $\alpha=1$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 365. And 365 is both the total of the days of the year and the number of the heavens and the value of the name Meithras (Mithras)—$M=40$; $\epsilon=5$; $\iota=10$; $\theta=9$; $\rho=100$; $\alpha=1$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 365.

One of the most interesting appearances of this practice was in the days of Nero. People wrote on the walls what they were afraid to say of him, and passed round jests and criticisms of him. One of these is retailed by Suetonius (*Nero*, 39). It runs:

A calculation new. Nero his mother slew.

This was written in Greek, and the point is that the numerical value of the letters in *Nero* is the same as the numerical value of the letters in the rest of the sentence. Therefore, Nero=the slayer of one's own mother, and when the Romans wrote this on the walls they were accusing Nero of being a matricide.

This even got into Christian exegesis. The Epistle of Barnabas (ix. 7, 8) takes Gn 14^{14} where Abraham is said to have won the victory with three hundred aud eighteen of his household. Eighteen in Greek is *ιη*, which are the first two letters of Jesus's name; three hundred is *t*, which is the Cross; therefore, this is a prefiguring of the victory of the Cross. Tertullian found Gideon's three hundred another prefiguring of the Cross (*Carm. adv. Marc.*, iii. 4). The fascination of numbers laid hold even on the early exegetes.

Before we proceed to the more elaborate solutions, there are certain simpler ones that we may clear away. There are some few who have wished to take the number 666 chronologically. In A.D. 1213 Pope Innocent III called for a new crusade because he held that Muhammadan power was destined to last for six hundred and sixty-six years, and at that time that period was near to an end. Certain others have taken it to refer to the six hundred and sixty-six years between Seleucus in 311 B.C. and the emergence of Julian the Apostate in A.D. 355. Finally, it has been suggested that the reference is to the year A.D. 666, in which year, it is said, Pope Vitalian decreed that all public worship should be in Latin. It is so clear that the number stands for a name that these suggestions can at once be disregarded.

Six hundred and sixty-six has been connected with the numerical value of the name *Jesus*; the letters of Jesus give the number 888—$\iota=10$; $\eta=8$; $\sigma=200$; $o=70$; $\upsilon=400$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 888. It is said that 777 would stand for perfection; that 888 will, therefore, stand for more than perfection, which is in Jesus, and that 666 will stand for imperfection, which is in Antichrist.

We now come to the names which this number has been taken to represent, and for this we are indebted to the great store of information in the old commentaries of A. E. Elliott and Moses Stuart.

Three names were suggested by Irenaeus. (1) *Ευανθας*: $E=5$; $\upsilon=400$; $\alpha=1$; $\nu=50$; $\theta=9$; $\alpha=1$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 666. But the word Euanthas is itself meaningless. (2) *Τειταν*: $T=300$; $\epsilon=5$; $\iota=10$; $\tau=300$; $\alpha=1$; $\nu=50$.

This could be taken as a reference to the Titans who rebelled against the gods, or it could be used as a reference to the Emperor Titus, who was not however a persecutor. (3) *Λατεινος*: $\Lambda=30$; $\alpha=1$; $\tau=300$; $\epsilon=5$; $\iota=10$; $\nu=50$; $o=70$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 666. This is a popular solution. It could stand for the Roman Empire, and it can be made also to stand for the Roman Church.

Primasius suggested the word *αρνουμε*: $\alpha=1$; $\rho=100$; $\nu=50$; $o=70$; $\upsilon=400$; $\mu=40$; $\epsilon=5$: Total 666. The word *αρνουμε* itself is meaningless, but it could be connected with the verb *αρνεισθαι*, to deny, and so mean apostate.

Arethas suggested several solutions. (1) *ὁ νικητης*: $o=70$; $\nu=50$; $\iota=10$; $\kappa=20$; $\eta=8$; $\tau=300$; $\eta=8$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 666. (2) *κακος οδηγος*: $\kappa=20$; $\alpha=1$; $\kappa=20$; $o=70$; $\varsigma=200$; $o=70$; $\delta=4$; $\eta=8$; $\gamma=3$; $o=70$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 666. This would mean *the evil leader*. (3) *αμνος αδικος*: $\alpha=1$; $\mu=40$; $\nu=50$; $o=70$; $\varsigma=200$; $\alpha=1$; $\delta=4$; $\iota=10$; $\kappa=20$; $o=70$; $\sigma=200$: Total 666. This would mean *the evil lamb*.

The interesting and significant thing about all this is that it is proof that the meaning of the number was just as mysterious in the Early Church as it is to-day.

We now come to modern interpretations. The number is a favourite playground of those who wish to find Antichrist in the Roman Catholic Church. The following solutions have been offered. (1) *Ιταλικα εκκλησια*: $\iota=10$; $\tau=300$; $\alpha=1$; $\lambda=30$; $\iota=10$; $\kappa=20$; $\alpha=1$; $\epsilon=5$; $\kappa=20$; $\kappa=20$; $\lambda=30$; $\eta=8$; $\sigma=200$; $\iota=10$; $\alpha=1$: Total 666. Elliott remarks that the name of no other national Church will give the same result! (2) *ἡ Λατινη βασιλεια*: $\eta=8$; $\Lambda=30$; $\alpha=1$; $\tau=300$; $\iota=10$; $\nu=50$; $\eta=8$; $\beta=2$; $\alpha=1$; $\sigma=200$; $\iota=10$; $\lambda=30$; $\epsilon=5$; $\iota=10$; $\alpha=1$: Total 666. Mr. Clarke who discovered this solution says that he tried it out on more than four hundred other kingdoms without again getting the result 666! (3) *Παπεισκος*: $\Pi=80$; $\alpha=1$; $\pi=80$; $\epsilon=5$; $\iota=10$; $\sigma=200$; $\kappa=20$; $o=70$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 666. *Παπεισκος* is of course taken to mean Pope.

As is only to be expected Roman Catholic attempts have been made to turn the tables, and the following two solutions may be quoted. (1) *Λουθερανα*: $\Lambda=30$; $o=70$; $\upsilon=400$; $\theta=9$; $\epsilon=5$; $\rho=100$; $\alpha=1$; $\nu=50$; $\alpha=1$: Total 666. This, of course, is an alleged form of the name Luther. (2) *Σαξονειος*: $\Sigma=200$; $\alpha=1$; $\xi=60$; $o=70$; $\nu=50$; $\epsilon=5$; $\iota=10$; $o=70$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 666. This is alleged to mean the Saxon, and is again intended to represent Luther.

Finally, in the realm of fantasy, we may look at certain of the interpretations which have seen certain great figures in this number. *Μαομετις*: $M=40$; $\alpha=1$; $o=70$; $\mu=40$; $\epsilon=5$; $\tau=300$; $\iota=10$; $\varsigma=200$: Total 666. This, of course, is a reference to Muhammad. (2) *Να Βοναπαρτι*: $N=50$; $\alpha=1$; $B=2$; $o=70$; $\nu=50$; $\alpha=1$; $\pi=80$; $\alpha=1$; $\rho=100$; $\tau=300$; $\iota=10$; $\alpha=1$: Total 666. This is a reference to Napoleon! (3) If A=100, B=101, C=102 and so on, the following result can be obtained: H=107; I=108; T=119; L=111; E=104; R=117: HITLER=666!

We may briefly note that some people have sought solutions in Latin. The difficulty here is that not all Latin letters have numerical equivalents; and therefore only the letters with equivalents can be counted. We may cite two of these 'solutions'. (1) The title of the Pope—VICARIUS GENERALIS DEI IN TERRIS; V=5; I=1; C=100; I=1; V=5; L=50; I=1; D=500; I=1; I=1; I=1: Total 666. (2) One of the great persecuting Emperors Diocletian named thus—DIOCLES AUGUSTUS; D=500; I=1; C=100; L=50; V=5; V=5; V=5: Total 666.

Moses Stuart, having dealt with what he considers fantastic solutions, says: '*Pudet has nugas*!' Even so, let us turn finally to the solutions which may be right. (1) Caligula was the Roman Emperor who actually tried to put his own image in the Holy of Holies. His name was in Greek *Γαιος Καισαρ*: $\Gamma=3$; $\alpha=1$; $\iota=10$; $o=70$; $\varsigma=200$; $K=20$; $\alpha=1$; $\iota=10$; $\sigma=200$; $\alpha=1$; $\rho=200$: Total 616. This would be a good solution but it gives us the inferior alternative reading of 616. (2) Deissmann favoured the solution *Καισαρ Θεος*: $K=20$; $\alpha=1$; $\iota=10$; $\sigma=200$; $\alpha=1$; $\rho=100$; $\Theta=9$; $\epsilon=5$; $o=70$; $\varsigma=200$. This would be in many ways the best solution of all, but again it results in the number of the inferior reading.

We are in the end left, we think, with only one possible solution. And it is a solution which works in Hebrew and not in Greek letters. This is in fact doubly likely. It is clear that the John of the Revelation thought in Hebrew, if he did not actually first write in Hebrew; and, if the number represents a Hebrew name the disguise is doubly impenetrable. We think the solution is almost certainly נרון קסר; Neron Cæsar; נ=50; ר=200; ו=6; ן=50; ק=100; ס=60; ר=200: Total 666; and, if the final N in Nero is dropped to bring the word into line with its Latin form the result is 616, which would explain the alternative reading.

The writer of the Revelation saw in the Roman Empire and its Emperor worship a Satanic power; and he saw that power culminate in the return of *Nero Redivivus*, the antichrist.

Sacrifice and Morality in the Old Testament[1]

By Professor Robert Dobbie, Emmanuel College, Toronto, Canada

Professor Rowley has recently argued that, in the Old Testament, sacrifice might be offered by men of proper spirit, 'men whose hearts were right with God', 'whose hands were not full of blood'.[2] This occurred when sacrifice was 'the organ of the spirit',[3] or 'accompanied by genuine penitence and submission',[4] or 'bore to God the humble and submissive spirit' of the worshipper.[5] Ritual was validated only by the attitude of heart. It is proposed to review Rowley's six-fold advocacy of his thesis.

I

Rowley contends that 'deliberate sinning, sinning as the expression of the settled purpose of the heart', was outwith the orbit of sacrifice. 'Such a sinner could not sincerely repent, and for him no sacrifice was valid. It was the sacrifices of such a person that the prophets declared useless, and in this they were at one with the Law.'[6]

This argument is supported by reference to Nu 15^{30}, according to which he who offends 'with a high hand' will be cut off from his people. Sins of the high hand, signifying essentially defiance, represent a conception of P. This would largely correspond to rebellion in the indictment of the prophets, but they did not regard rebellion as excluding repentance. In Nu 15^{30}, however, punishment, not repentance, is the norm of judgment. Further, the sin creates corporate uncleanness, which must be removed by the expulsion of the sinner; but the prophets do not recognize uncleanness as a moral or religious criterion.

Rowley further defends his thesis by reference to Pr 15^{8} $21^{3.\,27}$; and Sir $34^{18f.}$ These all affirm that the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord (Pr 15^{8} 21^{27}, Sir 34^{1}) that He prefers righteousness to sacrifice (Pr 21^{3}), that the prayer of the upright is His delight (Pr 15^{8}); it is not stated (though it might be implied in Pr 21^{27}) that his sacrifice is acceptable. It is affirmed that the Most High 'is not pacified for sins' by many sacrifices (Sir 34^{19}), and it would seem to be implied that He desires repentance. Thus a proper spirit of penitence would seem to need no sacrifice. The good man would not be involved in a cult designed to combat sin or uncleanness by expiation or appeasement.[7]

Rowley also refers to Mishna Yoma 8^{9}, Tosefta Yoma 5^{9}, and Lev. Rabba 2^{12}, which condemn exploitation of the Day of Atonement without repentance. He does not, however, quote Mishna Yoma 8^{9}, in verses which demand reconciliation between men as a condition whereby the Day of Atonement may effect atonement in their case. Further, Tosefta Yoma 5^{9} seems a commentary on Yoma 8^{8}, which regards the sin-offering and the unconditional guilt-offering as effecting atonement, and death and the Day of Atonement as effecting it if there is repentance. 'Repentance effects atonement for lesser transgressions . . . for graver transgressions it *suspends punishment* until the day of Atonement comes and effects atonement.'[8] Hence repentance is forensic, not redemptive; it merely suspends punishment, but does not reconcile men to God.

It is further doubtful whether the prophets would have formulated the conception of a 'sinner who could not sincerely repent'. Their affirmation of moral imperatives in religion implies the possibility of response to them; the demand for an impossible repentance would invalidate their message. The sinner incapable of repentance was a doctrinal nicety of post-exilic Judaism; to Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah at least repentance was a theological necessity.

II

Rowley's second argument is that, according to the 'framers of the Law', the sacrifice of a man who offered sacrifice sincerely 'could be the organ of God's approach to him in cleansing and fellowship'. Sacrifice could be the organ of blessing though only God was its source. 'If men made their sacrifices the organ of their approach to Him, He could make them also the organ of His approach to them in blessing'.[9]

Sincerity, however, is not a justification of

[1] We have been able to arrange that Professor Rowley will reply to this article next month.—*Editor.*

[2] *The Unity of the Bible* [1953], 43.

[3] *Ib.*, 51.

[4] 'The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament', in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, xxxiii. [1950–51], 95.

[5] 'The Unity of the Old Testament', in *B.J.R.L.*, xxix. [1945–46], 351.

[6] *The Unity of the Bible*, 45–46, and notes 1–3, p. 46.

[7] For Expiation, cf. Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, i. 80. For Appeasement, cf. Köhler, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, 188.

[8] Tosefta Yoma 5^{9}.

[9] *The Unity of the Bible*, 51; 'The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament', in *op. cit.*, 91–95.

sacrifice, nor does it make sacrifice a means of blessing. If sacrifice presupposes a Deity who is appeased by it, its objective necessity and its value do not depend on sincerity. If sacrifice offends Him morally, it will not be redeemed by sincerity. If it is otiose, sincerity alone, in the form of contrition, would make worship acceptable.

Further, the term 'Framers of the Law' is ambiguous. It suggests a homogeneous body. Post-exilic Judaism might seem so to regard it, since every precept was mandatory because it constituted revelation. To the Rabbis all statutes were authoritative because 'they were commanded in the perfect Pentateuch . . . but for this reason it was impossible for (them) to adopt the prophetic depreciation of sacrifices'.[1] This verdict recognizes a legalistic and a prophetic norm, but it is more precise to suggest that the content of the Law implied two divergent criteria; one ritualistic, involving a standard of cleannesss, the other forensic, entailing a canon of lawfulness or justice. The former implies atonement, expiation, or decontamination; the latter, punishment. These domains, though subsumed under one Scriptural or ecclesiastical standard, are heterogeneous. Their disparity appears in the fact that, as Rowley recognizes, sacrifices appertain mainly to sins committed inadvertently, unwittingly, unintentionally, or to conditions of uncleanness, whereas sins defined as crimes incur the penalty of death.[2]

The claim that sacrifice could be an organ of approach in fellowship is difficult to substantiate in view of the fact that the Temple was constructed on a principle of exclusion, whereby increasing degrees of Temple holiness became available to a decreasing number of claimants. An asymptotic approach to Deity was here symbolized. This structure presupposes not the idea of fellowship with God but the denial of such fellowship. So far from approaching men, the God of the Temple is not available to them in personal communion. It is true that to the Rabbis the Temple was the 'dwelling place of God',[3] but it is even more true that He was not accessible to any worshipper. Only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies, where the Divine presence was symbolized, and even he would have been liable to destruction but for the cloud of incense to be found there. The Temple structure therefore excludes the theology of a communicable Presence. Further, in the post-exilic Temple, the worshipper could not share the sacrificial service. He could bring his offering, identify himself with it, and slay it,[4] but the sacrifice was an *opus operatum*, offered by the priests, and resulting in absolution, which, in virtue of the impersonal passive of the Hebrew, may not even be regarded as pronounced by the priest.

Thus, it would seem, a non-moral condition becomes the means of a moral state; sacrifice provides Divine blessing. Rowley maintains that sacrifice alone could not save man from sin,[5] that only his humble surrender and obedience could make it the organ of Divine blessing. But the anomalous juxtaposition of the moral and the non-moral suggests that mingling of incommensurables which the Hebrews defined as תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ.[6] Rowley in the above reference supplies no quotations. In the absence of Scriptural authority it may be suggested that it is the lack of a meeting-ground between God and man that makes sacrifice necessary. In addition, since by definition in P morality is largely excluded from the sins to which sacrifice relates, the 'two-way traffic' of which Rowley speaks,[7] cannot include morality.

III

The Law demanded confession of sin with sacrificial offering, as Rowley recognizes.[8] This is stated in three texts: concerning failure to admit that one has heard the voice of swearing, or had contact with a defiling agency, or concerning an oath spoken, it would seem, without apparent knowledge;[9] respecting any violation of property rights;[10] and in Aaron's admission of the people's sin over the head of the goat.[11] 'That confession was made by the priest as the representative of the community, and in so far as it did not represent the spirit of the community it was meaningless.'[12]

These instances, however, are not homogeneous. In Lv 5^{1-13} the sin could only be *known* by confession. Evil has not been deliberately perpetrated, so that confession cannot relate to any moral deed, unless an inadvertent oath is moral as revealing character. In this section confession also loses what ethical status it might enjoy because it is followed, not by personally assured pardon, but by absolution achieved by sacrifice.

In Nu 5^{7-10} (the guilt-offering), the system impaired by trespass is restored to equilibrium by the

[1] Montefiore and Loewe, *A Rabbinical Anthology*, 26.
[2] *The Unity of the Bible*, 49.
[3] Montefiore and Loewe, *op. cit.*, 25.
[4] Lv 1^4 3^2 4^4; 'The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament', in *op. cit.*, 88.
[5] 'The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament', *op. cit.*, 95; *The Unity of the Bible*, 52; and H. H. Rowley, 'The Religious Value of Sacrifice' in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, lviii. [1946–47], 69–71.
[6] Lv 18^{23} 20^{12}.
[7] *The Unity of the Bible*, 56.
[8] *Ib.*, 44.
[9] Lv 5^{1-13}.
[10] Nu 5^{7-10}.
[11] Lv 16.
[12] 'The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament', in *op. cit.*, 94.

return of the original article or money, plus one fifth of its value.[1] Sacrifice may here be otiose.[2]

In the representative confession of Lv 16, no guarantee is possible that the community represented expresses any moral repentance, and the ritual makes no moral demands upon them.

It is also noteworthy that the prophets of the eighth century and Jeremiah would not have included the divagations of Lv 5^{1-13} within their conception of sin, or regarded the ceremony of Lv 16 as morally defensible. They would have condemned the property offences of Nu 5^{7-10}, but would have demanded repentance and conversion, not merely compensation, in respect of them. Eichrodt admittedly maintained that the restriction of sacrifices to sins of omission and inadvertence demonstrated prophetic influence,[3] but it may have been due to priestly factors, since it involves a triumph of ceremonial propriety over ethical obligation.

Nor is it without significance that the moral norm employed by the great prophets was not Law as understood by later Judaism, Law as Torah, constituting an absolute, final, and exhaustive Revelation.[4] It was rather the character of Yahweh as intrinsically moral. The relationship was thus not with Law but with a Personality. Nor do the prophets seem preoccupied with a Mosaic law or tradition as a canon of judgment; they are rather conscious of the moral imperatives of the God who even now, in their generation, is busy bringing nemesis upon His people.

IV

Rowley quotes R. Judah the Prince, ' Be heedful of a light precept as of a heavy one ',[5] to claim that it is the aim of Judaism ' to lift ritual offences to the level of moral offences. . . . The purpose of those who framed the Law was to stress the exceeding sinfulness of sin.' [6] Yet he recognizes that its emphasis on unwitting sin led to a neglect of much salutary prophetic preaching. Elevation of ritual propriety would not seem to foster a proper spirit in a worshipper.

An equal emphasis on ritual and moral commands must make the ritual of moral worth, or the moral only of ceremonial value, or both, in equal or varying degree, representative of an ultimate category. The Jewish Law regarded all commands, *qua* Revelation, as final. But this obscures the distinction between moral, non-moral, and immoral prescriptions. It destroys the substance of ethics by correlating the intentional and the unintentional. This inevitably leads to the scrupulantism which infects all ritualistic concern, or to a legalism occupied only with outward propriety.

V

Rowley maintains that if the pre-exilic prophets denounced sacrifices which were not the organ of the spirit, and the Law called for sacrifices which were, the only difference was one of emphasis.[7] ' Both regarded sacrifice as potent to bless the offerer only when it bore to God his humble and submissive spirit, that it might also bear to him from God the boons he sought.' Thus ' they became effective because they were charged with divine power '. Sacrifice is secondary to obedience and a right spirit; ' later Judaism rated but lightly the offering without the spirit that made it the organ of the offerer's approach to God '.

To this reasoning four objections may be made. (*a*) It is true that pre-exilic prophets denounced sacrifices which were not the organ of the spirit, but they may also have attacked them in principle, if the theological presuppositions of sacrifice contradicted those of their own faith. In this event the difference is not one of emphasis but of belief.

(*b*) Rowley's theory seems to imply the normalcy of sacrifice in an approach to God. No evidence of this occurs in the life of Amos, Hosea, Micah, or Jeremiah. There, as in Isaiah, the emphasis concerns piety and purity. All regarded central religious reality as consisting of the constraint of the Divine Word upon their life.

(*c*) In P the sacrificial system seems to operate without relation to rightness of spirit. The efficacy of the sin-offering depends upon the manipulation of blood, that of the guilt-offering primarily upon correct compensation; and in post-exilic Judaism all sacrifice involved priestly mediation. If in later years the Rabbis emphasized a proper spirit, and the subservience of sacrifice to prayer [8] (whereas in the Temple service prayer was offered in the lowest court),[9] they would seem to be modifying their priestly heritage.

(*d*) If the right spirit of the worshipper charges sacrifices with Divine power, the claim that they were divinely instituted to reconcile God and man

[1] H. Danby, *Mishnah, ad. loc.*; and Montefiore and Loewe, *op. cit.*, 318.

[2] But cf. H. C. Thomson in *Proceedings of Glasgow University Oriental Society* [1950–52], 20–26.

[3] *Op. cit.*, 195.

[4] Cf. MacGregor and Purdy, *Jew and Greek : Tutors unto Christ*, 70–76.

[5] ' The Unity of the Old Testament ', in *op. cit.*, 350.

[6] ' The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament ', in *op. cit.*, 102.

[7] ' The Unity of the Old Testament ', in *op. cit.*, 351.

[8] Montefiore and Loewe, *op. cit.*, 27.

[9] W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Jews and Judaism during the Greek Period*, 205 f.

would lose some validity. This claim Rowley, with P, acknowledges, but Amos and Jeremiah deny it.[1] Köhler may be right in maintaining that the cult was not a subject of Revelation until Ezekiel.[2] On this supposition the Divine power in sacrifice would derive, not from a human attitude, but from its Divine source.[3] On the other hand, no pre-exilic prophet regards sacrifice as an organ of the spirit; their demands relate exclusively to moral integrity and spiritual obedience.

VI

Rowley explains 'the collection of oracles of the pre-exilic prophets in the post-exilic age, and their veneration alongside the Law' as due to prophetic unwillingness to renounce sacrifice wholly.[4] This is doubtful on three grounds.

(*a*) The passionate nationalism of post-exilic Judaism was obliged to acknowledge the prophetic witness; a representative canon would have been incomplete without it. This does not postulate a basic agreement between priest and prophet; prophetic aspersions on priests,[5] and priestly animosity against prophets,[6] are not infrequent.

(*b*) The post-exilic prophets were mainly interested in ceremonial and sacerdotal concerns; in rebuilding the Temple,[7] in paying tithes,[8] in observing ritual nicety.[9] Such men could not appreciate their illustrious predecessors, or understand their attitude to a cult.

(*c*) A certain tension obtained between Prophecy and Law; in respect of truth continuously communicated in religious experience, and truth revealed in Torah; between inspiration which recognized no norm but Divine constraint, and a norm which judged inspiration; between creative individualism and corporate conservatism. Any correlation of them in terms of legal sponsorship would be liable to institutionalize, sacerdotalize, or ceremonialize the prophetic legacy.

[1] Am 5^{25}, Jer 7^{22}.

[2] *Op. cit.*, 186.

[3] Cf. 'The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament', in *op. cit.*, 87.

[4] 'The Unity of the Old Testament', in *op. cit.*, 351.

[5] Hos 5^{1} 6^{9}, Mic 3^{11}, Zeph 3^{4}, Jer 1^{18} $2^{8.26}$ 5^{31}, Ezk 7^{26} 22^{26}, Mal 1^{6}; cf. La 4^{13}.

[6] Am 7^{10}, Jer 26^{1-24}; cf. 2 K 10^{11}.

[7] Hag 1^{2-10}, Zec 1^{16} 2^{10-12} 4^{9} 6^{15} 8^{22-23}, Is $66^{1-4.6}$; cf. Mal 3^{1-5}.

[8] Mal 3^{8-10}.

[9] Hag $2^{10-14.\ 18}$, Zec 2^{12}, Mal 1^{6-14}, Jl $1^{9.\ 13}$.

Literature

JESUS AND THE SERVANT

In view of the wide acceptance of the opinion that in thinking of His death Jesus was deeply influenced by the Servant conception of Deutero-Isaiah it was perhaps to be expected that sooner or later a research student would investigate the problem anew and maintain the contrary thesis. This task has now been attempted in a dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol by Miss Morna D. Hooker, M.A. Dr. C. K. Barrett, who was one of her examiners, has generously supplied a Foreword in which he speaks of the unusual maturity of Miss Hooker's scholarship and declares his belief that she has made out her main point. The thesis has now been published under the title, *Jesus and the Servant* (S.P.C.K.; 27s. 6d. net).

The theme is well covered. After making a general survey of recent work on the problem Miss Hooker discusses the Servant passages in Deutero-Isaiah and the Jewish interpretation. The relevant passages in the New Testament are patiently examined, together with the general concept of suffering in these writings, and finally the vital question of the place of the Servant idea in the thought of Jesus and the Early Church is treated. An excellent Bibliography, many learned Notes, and detailed Indexes are supplied. The results of the investigation are almost entirely negative. 'There is', she says, 'no certain reference to the Songs themselves, which in any way suggests that Jesus was identified with a Messianic interpretation of the "Servant", or which is concerned with the significance of his suffering and death', and, further, 'there is no evidence that either he or the evangelists had the suffering of the Servant in mind' (p. 149).

Despite the desire to commend the work of a gifted research student it is impossible not to feel strong misgivings concerning the main arguments put forward. In the opening survey the classical article of J. Jeremias, παῖς θεοῦ in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* [1952] is mentioned, but no detailed consideration is given to it, and the learned treatise of H. Hegermann, *Jesaja 53 in Hexapla, Targum und Peschitta* [1954], mentioned later, is dismissed as 'totally unconvincing'. The meaning and background of the Servant passages are rightly selected for treatment, but no detailed exposition of Is 52^{13}–53^{12} is given. The tendency is to study the Songs in relation to

Hebrew prophecy in general and to play down their doctrinal importance. The presence of the idea of vicarious suffering and the promise of resurrection are noted, but the main emphasis lies on the ideas of future vindication and glory. The figure of the Servant, it is pointed out, was not a living concept in the time of Jesus and the idea of vicarious suffering had fallen into the background.

The most valuable part of the book is the examination of thirty-nine passages in the Synoptic Gospels which either reveal linguistic parallels to Deutero-Isaiah or contain predictions of suffering. The net is thrown widely, but since most of the passages are quite general in scope or of doubtful relevance, the importance of the vital passages, Mk 8^{31} $9^{12b.\ 31}$ $10^{33f.\ 45}$, Lk 17^{25} and 22^{37}, is obscured. Mark 10^{45b} is held to be alien to its context and the phrase 'for many' in no way refers to Is 53^{12}. The relevance of Lk 22^{37} is said to be 'extremely doubtful' in meaning and genuineness, and the four prophecies—Mk 8^{31} $9^{12b.\ 31}$ and $10^{33f.}$—are held to be insufficient to show any certainty that Jesus had the Servant in mind. Thus, the conclusion is drawn that there is very little in the Synoptics to support 'the traditional view' and certainly nothing that could be accepted as proof. One cannot but feel that if attention had been devoted to the allusive and original manner in which Jesus refers to Old Testament passages in general, the results of the investigation might have been very different. In considering the passages in John, the Acts, the Pauline Epistles, Hebrews, and 1 Peter sounder conclusions for the most part are reached, but here again much is rejected and it is argued that, if the Church did apply the Servant concept to Jesus, the New Testament writers 'did not consider it to be of central importance'. Neither Jesus nor His disciples understood the title 'Son of Man' as a Messianic term, and there is no justification for the view that it was re-interpreted in terms of the Servant concept. Jesus was not identified with the Servant 'for the simple reason that there was not, and never had been, a "Servant-figure" with whom to identify him' (p. 157). Apocalyptic ideas, it is held, provide a surer guide, for in Jesus we find 'the consummation of the sufferings of the martyrs' followed by the coming of the New Age.

Since the views of the author recall those of Hastings Rashdall, I have thought it right to allow her as far as is possible in a review to speak for herself. The general position taken resembles that of a pious Jew. It should be added, however, that in the last pages she asks the question, 'Has the Church been wrong, then, in thinking of Jesus in terms of Is liii?', and answers it by saying that 'Christian experience has shown the rightness of the Church's interpretation'. 'Christians too can look back and know, through the realization of their own sin and salvation and the injustice of Christ's sufferings, the vicarious and atoning power of the Cross' (p. 163). This is well said, but it prompts the question, In interpreting the Servant concept was the Church more discerning than Jesus?

VINCENT TAYLOR

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

In recent years the question of baptism has been much discussed and uneasiness on the subject of infant baptism has been widely expressed, though the practice has been vigorously counter-defended. Baptists have taken singularly little part in the discussion. Now, however, a group of ten younger Baptists has issued a collective volume as a contribution to the discussion, under the title *Christian Baptism* (Lutterworth Press; 27s. 6d.), edited by the Rev. A Gilmore.

The volume has an introductory chapter by Dr. E. A. Payne, who briefly reviews the course of discussions of the past thirty years, but who was not one of the group of ten authors. The remaining chapters, while each written by a member or members of the team, are the result of group discussions. S. F. Winward writes on 'Scripture, Tradition, and Baptism' and A. Gilmore on the 'Jewish Antecedents' of Christian baptism. The next chapter, dealing with 'Baptism in the New Testament', has been divided out amongst four writers, R. E. O. White, S. I. Buse, G. R. Beasley-Murray, and D. R. Griffiths. There follow three chapters dealing with the history of baptism, A. W. Argyle writing on 'Baptism in the Early Centuries', W. M. S. West on 'The Anabaptists and the Rise of the Baptist Movement', and D. M. Himbury on the unedifying 'Baptismal Controversies' of 1640–1900. The final chapter, on 'The Theology of Baptism' is by Neville Clark.

This is not merely a polemical presentation of the Baptist position, and the work will be studied with profit by many who do not share the practice of the Baptists. It is throughout marked by considerable learning, and as a guide to a voluminous literature it will have a real value. The chapter on the New Testament, and especially the section on Paul by Dr. Beasley-Murray, and the chapter on the Anabaptists, will be found widely useful, even though the latter does not really carry us far forward on the current issues, but merely seeks to do justice to the much misrepresented Anabaptists. One of the best sections of the book is S. F. Winward's chapter, in the course of which the writer observes that 'all

Christians, all churches, all communions . . . have the responsibility to listen to one another, since the Holy Spirit is given to the whole church and He is not the monopoly of any one part of it'.

The real contribution of the volume to current discussions lies in the final chapter, though this is not likely to please Baptists. For it is a sterile business to argue the question of infant baptism on the New Testament evidence alone. It is true that some paedo-Baptists claim to find evidence of infant baptism in the New Testament, but the evidence is so tenuous and has to be bolstered by so many confused analogies that it has failed to convince not a few scholars besides the Baptists. On the other hand, the common Baptist argument that infant baptism is wrong because it is not found in the New Testament can so easily be countered by the reply that this is an argument from silence, and one that ignores the fact that the New Testament is concerned with the first generation of the Church. The real question is how far infant baptism is consonant with the theology of baptism as found in the New Testament. This does not mean how far can infant baptism be interpreted in accordance with ideas found in the New Testament without any association with baptism, but how far can infant baptism be interpreted in accordance with the New Testament teaching on baptism. It is to this question that Mr. Clark addresses himself. He admits that Baptist writers have often exposed themselves to the charge of tithing mint and anise and cummin whilst neglecting the weightier matters of the Law, but declares that infant baptism has from the earliest times been a practice in search of a theology. He is persuaded that infant baptism has been weighed and found wanting, but that he is no mere Baptist apologist is clear from the fact that he recognizes that while paedo-Baptist practice has made use of the wrong rite, Baptist practice has enshrined the wrong emphasis. Where he will find the sharpest conflict with his own people, however, is in his declaration that 'the rebaptism as believers of those who have received baptism in infancy constitutes a blow at the heart of the Christian faith'. It will be this final chapter that will arouse most discussion, in both Baptist and paedo-Baptist circles. Unfortunately Mr. Clark is less lucid as a writer than acute as a thinker, and probably a number of readers will be doubtful if they have understood the passage which declares that 'the implications of baptism are never to be derived from the circumcision rite of old Israel. Rather is it in the light of Christian baptism, or, to be more exact, the cross-resurrection governing baptism, that circumcision is weighed, vindicated and condemned. By the discontinuity in unity of salvation-history, the continuities of history are broken and judged.'

H. H. Rowley

THE AMPLIFIED NEW TESTAMENT

It may well be that there will be some who will regard *The Amplified New Testament* (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids; $3.95) with extreme distaste, for it produces a translation which has no literary airs and graces; but we believe that this is the best single aid to understanding the language of the New Testament that has been published for many a day. There never was a more honest and painstaking attempt to get at the meaing of Scripture.

The Greek Text which is used is up-to-date. Mk 16^{9-20} is printed, but it is stated that it is not in the two earliest manuscripts. Jn 5^{4} is omitted. Mt $16^{2.3}$ is italicised, which is the sign that it is not really part of the text. The *Pericope Adulterae* is printed; its lack of textual support is frankly stated; but it is inserted because it is so much in the spirit of Jesus, and more would be lost by omitting it than by including it—a verdict which may be illogical but which many of us would support.

Let us, then, test this translation; we give a brief selection of the kind of things it does.

> 'Repent—that is, think differently; change your mind, regretting your sins and changing your conduct—for the kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Mt 3^{2}).
>
> 'Then Jesus was led (guided) by the (Holy) Spirit into the wilderness (desert) to be tempted—that is, tested and tried—by the devil' (Mt 4^{1}).
>
> 'Blessed—happy, to be envied, and spiritually prosperous [that is, with life—joy and satisfaction in God's favour and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions]—are the poor in spirit (the humble, rating themselves insignificant), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5^{3}).
>
> 'Therefore, since we are justified—acquitted, declared righteous, and given a right standing with God—through faith, let us [grasp the fact that we] have [the peace of reconciliation] to hold and to enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One' (Ro 5^{1}).
>
> 'For we have heard of your faith in Jesus Christ [the leaning of your entire human personality on Him in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom and goodness] and of the love which you have and show for all the saints (God's consecrated ones)' (Col 1^{4}).

Passages enclosed in round brackets express meaning contained in the Greek word; passages enclosed in square brackets are justified clarifying words and comments, beyond the Greek.

We have no doubt whatever of the value of this translation. As far as we have tested it—one has to live long with a translation really to evaluate it—it is meticulously linguistically accurate, and its clarifying comment is singularly unbiassed. To read this translation is to get as near to the Greek as it is possible to get in an English translation. It has its errors. For instance, in Mt 5^{28} it fails to bring out the fact that *pros to epithumēsai autēs* means in order to, with the deliberate intention of, lusting after her. But any faults this book has are altogether counterbalanced by its invaluable virtues.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

Church Dogmatics, III. Part 1.: *The Doctrine of Creation*, by Karl Barth (T. and T. Clark; 45s. net).

The resolution of Barth's translators will soon have caught up with that of their master. Barth himself says that he approached the doctrine of creation somewhat reluctantly, and we suspect that something of his reluctance to write will be shared by that of others to read, for this is the least interesting of all the volumes. With its overriding theme, that creation and redemption must be kept closely together in theological thinking few, if any, will quarrel, and most will welcome it. It is the long and tedious exegesis of Gn 1 and 2, over two hundred and thirty pages of it, that palls and most of what is written here we could do without.

An interesting exception to this regrettable judgment is the section on Gn 1^{26}, the making of man in the image of God. The translator has obviously had difficulty with the last sentence of the first paragraph on p. 183, and who could blame him? What it appears to mean is that the confrontation within the deity is the ground for the I-Thou relationship which is proper to man. We wonder if the reference to 'male and female' will carry all the meaning that Barth attributes to it. Obviously his exegesis is determined by what he wishes to say later about the relationship of Christ to the Church.

On whether the image of God in man can be lost Barth has a simple answer. Man can never lose it because it was never his to lose. The image of God in man rests upon God's unchanging purpose for him, not in man himself.

Much of the exegesis of the Jahwistic account appears strained and fanciful. There should not be much difficulty in finding the answer to the question asked on p. 321, Why could not man be alone?, but Barth's answer is, because the Man Jesus was not alone. Why did the first man have to fall into a deep sleep? Because the Church of Jesus Christ was to have its origin in his mortal sleep. Why had the woman to be taken out of the man—to be 'formed' from his rib? Because the death of Christ was to be His sacrifice for His Church.

It is a relief to turn from this sort of *eisegesis* to the final section of the book in which Barth expounds the foundations of Christian pessimism, and optimism, particularly the latter. In Jesus Christ God has taken man, the creature, to Himself, and by the Resurrection has exalted Him for ever. God's No to the sinner pronounced on Calvary is swallowed up in the resounding Yes of the Resurrection. Here the volume reaches the very highest levels of theological exposition.

On the question of the terms in which we may speak of creation Barth rejects the word myth and expresses his own preference for the word saga. There cannot be a history in the usual sense of the term, for there were no historians, but by means of saga a historical meaning is transmitted in story form. That essential meaning is that the world was created for the sake of salvation-history. In this sense redemption and reconciliation are its presuppositions. Christ, His Kingdom and His Church are not an afterthought, but are the very ground of creation.

PERCY SCOTT

The great virtue of Canon E. Moore Darling—and it is a great virtue—is his indestructible verve for life and living. He is over the three score years and ten, and yet he writes with a vigour and a radiance which would do credit to a young adventurer setting out on the campaign of the ministry. In *Making the Most of Life* (Skeffington; 15s. net) he gives us what is in effect a handbook to the teaching of Jesus. But it is an antidote to the kind of approach to religion which made a man say in Canon Moore Darling's hearing: 'I want to have a bit more fun before I openly declare for religion.' Canon Moore Darling presents us with a Jesus in whom, in Alfred Noyes' phrase, 'tenderness and truth were perfectly balanced'.

One of the features of this book is its astonishing compression. The Beatitudes, the Parables, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments are each dealt with in three or four pages, and in every case the brief exposition has something of real value to say. It is, for instance, an interesting thing to find certain of Jesus' parables classed as parables of efficiency.

Canon Moore Darling quotes almost apologetically the scene in Maeterlinck's 'The Blue Bird' in which Mytil and Tyltil visit the Kingdom

of the Past and find the tiny cottage with the old man and woman fast asleep. 'Why', says the girl, 'it's Grannie and Grandad. But we thought you were dead.' 'No, my dear', replies the old woman, 'we're only asleep, and even now, when anyone who loves us thinks about us, of course we wake up.'

Canon Moore Darling loves his fellow-men and thinks about them, and this is a book which is calculated to awaken them. It is a simple book, a book easy to read, a book quite unconcerned with critical problems and approaches; and for that very reason it is a book for the wayfaring man. We note that it is the first volume of a new series called 'The Seekers' Library'. The series will be both popular and valuable, if it maintains this standard.

We welcome a reprint of the famous lectures delivered at Yale some eighty years ago—*Eight Lectures on Preaching*, by Phillips Brooks, with an introduction by Dr. John R. H. Moorman (S.P.C.K.; 9s. 6d. net). The lapse of time has not made these lectures out-moded. Can one get a better definition of preaching than 'the communication of truth by man to men'? How shrewd is the remark: 'A man's first wonder when he begins to preach is that people do not come to hear him. After a while, if he is good for anything, he begins to wonder that they do.' We conclude our welcome with another gem, 'Preach doctrine, preach all the doctrine that you know, and learn for ever more and more; but preach it always, not that men may believe it, but that men may be saved by believing it'.

Despite the great number of books 'introducing' the Dead Sea Scrolls there is always room for a fresh book, provided it has something really new to contribute, and in *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (S.C.M. ['Studies in Biblical Theology', No. 26]; 12s. 6d. net) Father J. T. Milik has abundantly fulfilled this condition. The author is the leader of the international, inter-confessional team of scholars working on the scrolls in the Palestine Archaeological Museum in Jerusalem, and has participated in all aspects of the work—archaeology, decipherment and interpretation. The book was first written in French, and published in 1957, and the present translation was produced by Mr. John Strugnell, another member of the team, who was in personal daily contact with Father Milik whilst the translation was in progress.

In addition to providing a masterly description of the discoveries and the new MSS from Cave IV, the author has given his own interpretation of the historical and religious background of the scrolls. He places the first contact of the sect with Jewish history in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the Teacher of Righteousness, who led the Essenes (the sect of the Scrolls in general) to Qumran *c.* 150 B.C. What he has to say about the history of the Essenes, the relationship of the scrolls to the New Testament and other matters will be very seriously considered by all experts. At the end of the book there are twenty-five plates. This is an excellent work, to be acquired by all students and specialists in this field of study.

Healing and Salvation, by Pastor Dorothee Hoch (S.C.M.; 6s. net), is one of the series 'Studies in Ministry and Worship.' Condensed as this little booklet is, it gives from the author's point of view a synoptic view of healing in both the Old and the New Testaments and also in the history of the Church. If anything, the author links sin and sickness too closely. Nevertheless there are no extravagant claims; and her chapters on 'Different Kinds of Miracles' and 'Jesus' Power To-day' are well done. She uses psychosomatic theories of illness to clinch her views of the relation between sickness and religion. Her position can be summed up in this quotation: 'Those who comply with the demand (to continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in the breaking of bread and in prayers) and constantly turn afresh to Jesus in their lives, may and can remain free from much mental and physical distress. The Bible knows how closely spirit, soul and body are interrelated, and affect one another. The discoveries of psychosomatic medicine only confirm what intuition, schooled in the Bible, had long ago guessed.'

From the Tyndale Press comes a collection of Essays by the late Professor B. B. Warfield of Princeton, entitled *Biblical Foundations* (15s. net). The topics handled are Revelation, Inspiration, The Trinity, The Supernatural Bible of Jesus, The Person of Christ in the New Testament, Christ as Sacrifice, The New Testament Terminology of Redemption, Predestination and Faith. All have force, logic and lucidity. As to whether all are equally convincing there may well be difference of opinion. The author was the outstanding critic of liberalism in theology but the liberalism of that day—forty years ago—is well-nigh dead and there is no point in thrashing a dead horse. Our day is marked by a new conservatism. Biblical theology and Biblical preaching are strongly commended and there is even a new appreciation of the unity of the Bible. Still, Warfield's views on some matters would find little favour except among Fundamentalists.

Which Way British Theology?

By Professor Nels F. S. Ferré, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Mass., U.S.A.

A leading British churchman keeps writing me for a prescription for winning the ninety per cent. of the British population who take no active interest in the Church. My reply is always the same: I don't know the answer. But one thing I do know: faith determines life. Therefore faith is at fault.

Theology, to provide strong faith, should centre in God, in the living God who raises the dead. The Church began with the bold declaration of the Resurrection. Much theology, however, is culture-conditioned. The hands are theological, but the voice belongs to culture. That is why it sounds familiar and right.

Liberalism was the voice of secular confidence in science, education and culture. It accommodated its claims to fit human expectations. Certainly it was grounded in man's general experience and best thought. But for this reason it failed to find wings. Theological accommodationism is a parasite dependent on its host. It dies with its host. Liberalism is dead, or dying, as secular confidence wanes.

The answer? Polish the Biblical model. Long ago Bacon criticized Copernicus for paying more attention to a mathematical model than to fact. He retorted: 'I polish my model'. Einstein was likewise blamed for not being empirical. Lord Herbert advised him to mind facts. His answer? 'I polish my model and the fruits of science will prove me right.' Creativity, he averred, belongs to mathematics.

In the same way theology must learn to polish its Biblical model. Faith is not built on facts but on God who can change the facts. Seeing Christ, faith rests on the Fact who acts. Liberalism is no answer to our need for a full faith.

Then why not Barth? He trumpets faith. He spurns every theology of adjustment. But faith, while not dependent on facts, is *for* facts. Faith must illuminate and show relevance for facts. It should give hope to man when he sees how faith can change facts. Barth until recently has scorned such relevance. He has gloried in an unrelated freedom of God. Of late he has admitted his error in *Die Menschlichkeit Gottes*. He may still have time to do the impossible: correct it. In any case Barth up to now has failed to provide the formula: theology *as faith* providing direction to scholarship *as reason*. Faith and facts challenge and check each other. Thank God for Barth; read and learn from him; but don't follow him in his error.

Bultmann then? His theology centres in faith and yet speaks in the midst of man's problems. He is no Liberal nor Barthian. But neither has he a God who counts. His God is reduced to power for personal experience. He knows no personal God who created and controls the universe. His God is near but small. Faith scorns such accommodation to human experience.

The rewrite-the-Bible movement of Bultmann is a poor antidote to the back-to-the-Bible Barthian school. We need, rather, the fulfilment of the Biblical message by the distinguishing of Biblicism from the polishing of the Biblical model. The former is a one-level Biblical theory of inspiration, an unthinking acceptance of the Bible as authority. The latter uses the context of Christ as Holy Love to interpret the generality, or the total content, of man's experience in the Bible. It is a two-level theory of inspiration having full Biblical authority in the universal Love of God, come in Christ, while completely open for full investigation of man's ordinary experience fallibly contained in the Bible. Thus the Bible becomes authority or revelation *for faith* and available *to reason* or man's experience.

British theology has a long record of steadiness. As a whole it has seldom gone to extremes. Its temptation, however, has been to stay closer to fact than to faith. In times of general prosperity and national success such theology has worked by borrowing its strength from culture. In times of secular despair and national anxiety a natural swing is to irrational faith or existential doubt. Hence the relevance but culture-conditionedness of Barth on one side and Bultmann on the other. Linguistic analysis, moreover, in the use of theology can help us separate the realm of faith from the place of reason. Then it can be left behind by a theology mature and secure enough to know its own function.

Such a theology will polish its Biblical model well and be rewarded by the fruits of the Spirit, including rightful knowledge. Only genuine faith can convert a disillusioned and confused 'ninety per cent.' Such faith will remain faith and not try to become knowledge. But such a faith will also both produce and interpret facts, for facts in their fullest context, Christ as Holy Love, indicate the Christian faith to be true. Theological truth, however, is never based on mere fact or mere reason. It comes from our being grasped by God and given the eyes of faith.

Edwin Muir

By the Reverend W. B. J. Martin, D.D., Visiting Professor of Homiletics, The University of Chicago

'There (in Dresden) during the hot, idle summer I seemed at last to recover from the long illness that had seized me when, at fourteen, I came to Glasgow. I realized that I must live over again the years I had lived wrongly, and that every one should live his life twice, for the first attempt is always blind'.[1]

This is a sentence from what Stephen Spender, the English poet, has called a minor classic—the *Autobiography* of Edwin Muir, who died at his cottage in Cambridge, England, after many years of wandering. Commenting on those years, during which he met Muir from time to time, now in London, now in Edinburgh, Prague and Rome, Spender says: 'On each occasion I was struck by the integrity of purpose in his work and life, which made him seem a pilgrim from place to place rather than a wanderer like myself. Indeed, he had the purpose which converted a life of shifting jobs into a spiritual pilgrimage'.[2]

Pilgrim is the inevitable word in any discussion of Muir. The very titles of his poems, 'The Road', 'The Voyage', 'The Unfamiliar Place', 'The Return', reveal how strong was his sense of life as a journey, and one which, as 'The Labyrinth', 'The Unattained Place' and 'The Bridge of Dread', indicate, was no carefree amble through tamed and familiar territory but a strenuous and often hazardous enterprise. Muir's choice of poetic symbols too—Abraham, Achilles, Hector, Tristram, Telemachos—point to his deep and abiding conviction that 'only the inward journey is real'. Circumstances beyond his control shuttled him back and forth across Europe, uprooted him time and again, so that his outward journeys seemed arbitrary and confused, but refusing to be hurried or stampeded, he linked them together by an inward victory over events. He was born on a poor farm on the lonely island of Wyre in the Orkneys, from whence he was abruptly ejected and thrown into the cauldron of near-slum life in a teeming industrial city. When Muir says that he fell ill in Glasgow, the word 'fell' is carefully chosen to relate his physical decline to the crushing of his sensitive spirit and the loss of original innocence. For eighteen years he endured the rootless fragmentariness of city life, working at a variety of uncongenial jobs—clerking in a brewery, in a shipping office, and, a nightmare experience this, in a bone-factory. He was thirty-two when he married and left Glasgow for London with his wife Willa. For some years he wrote for *The New Age*, chiefly paragraphs in imitation of Nietzsche, under whose influence he then was, and subsequently travelled for the British Council as cultural director in Dresden, Prague and Rome. On his return to Scotland he became the first Warden of Newbattle Abbey, near Edinburgh, an experimental residential college for working-men. He was visiting Professor of Poetry at Harvard in 1955–56, and then settled in Cambridge, England, writing poetry, contributing reviews to the leading literary periodicals, researching on the Ballads, and, as always, giving friendship and inspiration to many younger poets and critics. Standing outside the literary currents of his time and working in familiar metres, he was nevertheless a thoroughly modern man, esteemed by poets as a poet's poet.

Doctor Muir (his three doctorates are honorary, for he finished his formal education at fourteen) produced a body of work astonishing in its range—three novels, ten volumes of poetry, essays, travel-books, several volumes of Scottish history, including a biography of John Knox, a corpus of literary criticism both sensitive and penetrating, and, together with his wife and comrade Willa, translated and introduced to the British public the major works of Kafka—*The Trial* and *The Castle*. His shy, unassuming manner, his complete absence of self-advertisement, his independence of contemporary literary fashions, have tended to keep him out of the limelight. His work is as unemphatic and unpretentious as the man himself, but concerned as it is with the abiding themes of birth and death, childhood and age, love and fear, slavery and freedom, time and eternity and possessing the inner toughness of the man, it can afford to wait until at last the many agree with the one discerning critic who said at its first appearance:

[1] *An Autobiography*, 192.
[2] *World within World*, 251.

'Herein will be found the brilliant light of true poetry'.

As a poet Edwin Muir began late. He was thirty-five before he wrote a line of verse. His poetry was not made, it grew. It was drawn out of him as part of the attempt to 'live over again' the years that he had lived wrongly, blindly, uncomprehendingly. In Rainer Maria Rilke's *Letters* he speaks of his resistance to psychoanalysis. He wrote to a friend, 'You probably know that Gebsettal has been working with my wife since the Spring. With her the problem is different. Her work (sculpture) has never helped her, while mine from the beginning has been a kind of self-treatment'. Muir's work too was a kind of inward healing. Actually he had begun a course of analysis in London, at the strong insistence of his editor A. R. Orage, but broke it off when he realized that his process of self-discovery and healing must come through 'The Journey Back', to quote the title of his own poem.

Much of what is found in *Collected Poems* and *One Foot in Eden* may therefore be read as Muir's attempt to take possession of his own childhood, to re-live that idyllic time on the Orkney farm when boy and man, man and Nature, man and the very beasts of the field dwelt in a pre-fallen world. 'I do not know whether in others the impressions of the first seven years of their lives remain so vivid and lasting, or if it is good that they should. In any case we need a symbolic stage on which the drama of human life can play itself out for us, and I doubt whether we have the liberty to choose it. The little island was not too big for a child to see in it an image of life; land and sea and sky, good and evil, happiness and grief, life and death discovered themselves to me there. . . . In recollecting these years in Wyre I recovered an image of life more complete than I had known in all the years between'.[1] So, in poems like 'The Return', 'Horses', 'The Animals' and the poem beginning,

> My childhood all a myth
> Enacted in a distant isle,

Muir grasped anew the unity of life before it was shattered by his descent into the hell of his slum adolescence. And this probing and re-capturing of the familiar sights and sounds of country life, the artless immediate contact with the men on the farm, with his own father and brothers, with the world of animals too, enables him to seize upon the profound symbol of the Second Advent of Christ and to enter into its inward meaning. At the close of 'The Transfiguration', he writes:

> But he will come again, it's said, though not
> Unwanted and unsummoned; for all things,
> Beasts of the field, and woods, and rocks, and seas,
> And all mankind from end to end of the earth
> Will call him with one voice. In our own time,
> Some say, or at a time when time is ripe.
> Then he will come, Christ the uncrucified,
> Christ the discrucified, his death undone,
> His agony unmade, his cross dismantled—
> Glad to be so—and the tormented wood
> Will cure its hurt and grow into a tree
> In a green springing corner of young Eden. . . .

But Muir was not content to live over again the years of childhood; he had to come to terms with his unconscious life, which in his case broke through the thin crust of dreams in a remarkable way. Many pages of *An Autobiography* are taken up recounting the complicated and frequently horrifying images that seemed to him to be revelations of the unconscious. He had broken off psycho-analytical treatment, partly at the insistence of the analyst, because the treatment served to encourage the production and recollection of dreams, many of which left Muir shaken with dread and disgust. 'I saw that my lot was the human lot, that when I faced my own unvarnished likeness I was one among all men and women, all of whom had the same desires and thoughts, the same failures and frustrations, the same unacknowledged hatred of themselves and others, the same hidden shames and griefs, and that if they confronted these things they could win a certain liberation from them'.[2]

In a poem like 'The Labyrinth', for example, we witness his attempt to externalize these dreams, these messages from the unconscious, and so to obtain victory over them. 'The Labyrinth' is not only a picture of his own personal inner life with its confused and tortuous mazes, though it is certainly that; it recalls too the underground passages and corridors, the dark winding ways, the subterranean chambers familiar in the Eastern Mystery Religions, so that in writing this poem Muir consciously sets out to see his own experiences within the larger context of all men's groping, all men's initiation into maturity and understanding. But the victory is never totally won.

> . . . since I came out that day,
> There have been times when I have heard my footsteps
> Still echoing in the maze . . .
> . . . And then I'd stumble
> . . . . . .
> As if the maze itself were after me
> And soon must catch me up.

Nevertheless, thanks to his inward vision of what lies beyond the maze, he is able to walk with confidence even in the winding shadows. By re-grasping the whole of his experience and

[1] *An Autobiography*, 206.

[2] P. 158.

imaginatively relating it to experience of all mankind, he shakes free of illusions and shadows.

That was the real world; I have touched it once,
And now shall know it always. But the lie,
The maze, the wild-wood waste of falsehood, roads
That run and run and never reach an end,
Embowered in error—I'd be prisoned there
But that my soul had birdwings to fly free.
Oh these deceits are strong almost as life.
Last night I dreamt I was in the labyrinth,
And woke far on. I did not know the place.[1]

A glance at the title-page of Muir's *Collected Poems* reveals that much of his work is woven around and draws its illumination and sustenance from the ancient myths and legends of humanity. He lived over again his own personal life in contexts of understanding given him by such mythic heroes as Oedipus, Orpheus, Prometheus. He seizes upon these symbolic figures not only because they root his individual struggles and pilgrimage in the personal unconscious, but in what Jung has called *The Collective Unconscious*, or what Yeats (with whom Muir has many affinities) has called *Spiritus Mundi*. With the aid of the 'archetypes', those recurring symbols that carry experiences common to all men, Muir floods light into the murky recesses and corridors of his own life, and takes new possession of his fragmentated experiences. As he put it in *Transition*, written in 1926, 'Nothing is wholly real until it finds an image as well as a formula for itself. For the image is the record that the conception has been steeped in the unconscious and there accepted by the deeper potencies of the mind'. The myth, therefore, not only gives him his own experience back to himself, it enables him to communicate to others at a depth not possible through the use of the conceptual statement alone.

But Muir did not confine himself to the use of the classical myths. More and more as time went on he found himself returning to the Biblical myths that had nourished his own childhood—Adam in Eden, Abraham 'going out not knowing whither he went', Moses and his recalcitrant tribes. In particular, the story of the Fall, taken as an archetype, a reading of universal experience, enabled him to understand the years that he had lived blindly and to weave into a new pattern the fragments of his disordered life. It is not surprising that his last collection of poems carries the title *One Foot in Eden*, for that poem wonderfully and simply conveys what he owed to this ancient myth for the comprehension and apprehension of his vagrant journeys.

One foot in Eden still, I stand
And look across that other land.
The world's great day is growing late,
Yet strange these fields that we have planted
So long with crops of love and hate.
Time's handiworks by time are haunted,
And nothing now can separate
The corn and tares compactly grown.
The armorial weed in stillness bound
About the stalk; these are our own.
Evil and good stand thick around
In the fields of charity and sin
Where we shall lead our harvest in.

Yet still from Eden springs the root
As clean as on the starting day.
Time takes the foliage and the fruit
And burns the archetypal leaf
To shapes of terror and of grief
Scattered along the winter way.
But famished field and blackened tree
Bear flowers in Eden never known.
Blossoms of grief and charity
Bloom in these darkened fields alone.
What had Eden ever to say
Of hope and faith and pity and love
Until was buried all its day
And memory found its treasure trove?
Strange blessings never in Paradise
Fall from these beclouded skies.[2]

It is this attempt to 'live over again' his own life that led to Muir's becoming a Christian, or rather, since there was no dramatic conversion and repentance, to his discovery that he had always been one.

In *An Autobiography*, he writes: 'I had believed for many years in God and the immortality of the soul; I had clung to the belief even when, in horrifying glimpses, I saw animals peeping through human eyes. . . . Now I realized that, quite without knowing it, I was a Christian, no matter how bad a one; and I remembered a few days later that Janet Adam Smith had told me, half-teasingly . . . that my poetry was Christian poetry: the idea then had been quite strange to me. I had a vague sense during these days that Christ was the turning-point of time and the meaning of life to everyone, no matter what his conscious beliefs; to my agnostic friends as well as Christians.'

But of the splendour and richness of that rediscovered belief, the full implications of the meaning of Christ for all men, he was not fully conscious until his work with The British Council took him to Italy. 'I was aware of religion chiefly as the Sacred Word', he writes, 'and the church itself, severe and decent, with its touching bareness and austerity, seemed to cut off religion from the rest of life and from all the week-day world, as if it

[1] *Collected Poems*, 137.

[2] *Collected Poems*, 189.

were a quite specific thing shut within itself. . . . It did not tell me by any outward sign that the Word had been made flesh.' Now in Italy, he saw the image everywhere, not only in churches, reminding everyone of the Incarnation. As he looked back over his Calvinist boyhood, he reports :

The Word made flesh here is made word again,
A word made word in flourish and arrogant crook.
See there King Calvin and his iron pen,
And God three angry letters in a book,
And there the logical hook
On which the Mystery is impaled and bent
Into an ideological instrument.

And this was no mere revolt against childhood religion, no mere theological disagreement. The whole of Muir's life was a protest against abstraction, against every attempt to compartmentalize and functionalize man. The attempt to turn the living creature into an abstraction in the name of religion—theological man—was no less a crime in his eyes than the attempt to make him economic man, political man, or industrial man.

Everywhere, not least in religion,

The fleshless word, growing, will bring us down,
Pagan and Christian man alike will fall,
The augeries say, the white and black and brown,
The merry and sad, theorist, lover, all
Invisibly will fall :
Abstract calamity, save for those who can
Build their cold empire on the abstract man.
(' The Incarnate One ' in *One Foot in Eden*, 47.)

Two years ago, in a private letter to the writer, Muir let fall as a characteristic aside, a remark which seems to sum up his contribution to the modern world and especially to those of us inside the Christian Church who are striving to be interpreters of and for our age. Referring to modern society, he wrote, ' We are sick, and we do not know it, or rather—which is worse—*we know it only in the wrong way* '. His own hard-won, personally tested diagnosis of the age in which we live is that it labours under the burden of abstraction. It was because he saw that Communism was only able to build its ' cold empire on the abstract man ' that he refused to follow his fellow-poets who were swinging left in the 'thirties, but he was clear-eyed enough to see that the trend of our *whole* civilization is towards the production of ' abstract man '. The menace of a technological civilization is not merely that it turns man the craftsman into man the machine-minder, the functionary ; not merely that the organization of production is followed by the organization of the consumer, for a standard product desires a standard customer; but that religion too, when it is untrue to its own incarnational faith, may turn against man, requiring from him only the partial and abstract response of his personal life. It is the glory of our faith that it speaks to the whole man, body, soul and spirit, that it integrates imagination and reason, consciousness and the unconscious. But if the Word is divorced from the flesh, then our religion tends to become a series of statements, a theology consisting largely of propositions and concepts requiring the assent of ' theological man ' —an abstraction as monstrous as ' economic man ', ' political man ', or any other abstraction. So, in his poem, he turns to the kirk on the barren brae, and asks :

How could our race betray
The Image, and the Incarnate One unmake
Who chose this form and fashion for our sake ?

Because Muir himself strove to restore the Image, his long pilgrimage brought him at length to the place from which he had started, but now he knew the place for the first time. By ' living twice ' he ' came to himself ' and to the Image who, he now saw, had lighted every man coming into the world.

As a pilgrim Muir was under no misapprehension about the difficulties and trials of the way. In ' The Difficult Land ' (*One Foot in Eden*, 60), he paints the hardships and frustrations of the territory into which we are cast.

This is a difficult land. Here things miscarry
Whether we care, or do not care enough. . . .
. . . there are times
When name, identity, and our very hands,
Senselessly labouring, grow most hateful to us,
And we would gladly rid us of these burdens
(Which yet are knit to us as flesh to bone),
Enter our darkness through the doors of wheat
And the light veil of grass. . . .
And gather into the secrecy of the earth
Furrowed by broken ploughs lost deep in time.

But in spite of these moments of despair, these sobering flashes of doubt, the pilgrimage *is* a pilgrimage and not a mere wandering, and without pressing the point Muir suggests in the last memorable and simple line the faith that might sustain us.

This is a difficult country, and our home.

Recent Foreign Theology

Infant Baptism in the Early Church. Professor Joachim Jeremias is well known as one of the most outstanding of living New Testament scholars, and any book from his pen is sure of a welcome and attentive reading. He has now published a study of *Infant Baptist in the First Four Centuries*.[1] He argues that the New Testament references to the baptism of households imply that children were included, and further that Jewish proselyte baptism —which in common with most scholars to-day he believes to have been of pre-Christian origin— influenced the form of Christian baptism, and therefore probably influenced it in this respect. In Jewish proselyte baptism children were baptized with their parents, but children subsequently born were not baptized. Professor Jeremias holds that at first children born in Christian wedlock were not baptized, and that this was the practice in Corinth in A.D. 54. He then examines later evidence which points to the conclusion that the extension of infant baptism to children born in Christian wedlock began soon after the middle of the first century, and continued until the fourth century when there was a strong reaction against it. Much valuable evidence is gathered here. The reviewer has reserves at some points, and particularly in the use that is made of Mk 10^{13-16}. Here the author freely recognizes that this passage has nothing to do with baptism, but he thinks that the use of the verb κωλύειν, which was a technical term in connexion with baptism, indicates that its inclusion in the Gospel was designed to support infant baptism. The fact that κωλύειν is used in connexion with baptism (cf. Ac 8^{36}) is slender evidence that it had any such connexion here, since the verb is in no sense limited to such a technical use ; and the fact that the passage has been used to support infant baptism is not evidence that it was designed to be so used, in view of its admitted irrelevance to baptism at all. Professor Jeremias's book is nevertheless an important one, whose translation into English is to be desired.

Holy Graves. A second work of Professor Jeremias' has appeared simultaneously. This is devoted to a study of holy graves and of their place in the popular religion of the time of our Lord.[2] We find in Mt 23^{29} and Lk 11^{47} references to the veneration accorded to the graves of the prophets, and Professor Jeremias is able to show how numerous were such graves. A considerable amount of research has gone into the preparation of this work, which collects ancient traditions about the graves of Old Testament worthies and other Jewish persons, both in Palestine and in the surrounding countries, and the belief that the holy men and women buried in them were still present in their graves and able to give protection and help to those who came to them. In the popular religion they were credited with the power to work wonders, or to intercede effectively on behalf of men. The reader interested in this curious by-path of Biblical study will find a surprising wealth of information gathered together here.

The Year's Work in Norwegian Humanities. A valuable annual survey of Norwegian work in the field of the humanities has begun to appear, and the second volume covers the years 1951–52.[3] Important articles as well as books are included, and occasionally articles written by Norwegian scholars and published abroad are mentioned. Some of the entries are brief summaries of the works by the authors themselves, but most are critical summaries by other Scandinavian scholars, followed by a list of other reviews that have been published both in Norway and abroad. All the summaries and reviews—some of which are quite extended—are in English, so that this volume makes accessible to the English reader the substance of the work done in the entire field of the humanities by Norwegian scholars. More than seventy of the entries deal with articles and books on religion and theology, including homiletics and missions. Works of outstanding importance, such as Mowinckel's *Han som Kommer* (now available in English) and *Sangoffer og offersang*, naturally find mention, but also articles such as Holm's rationalistic discussion of demythologization, Aukrust's study of Eckhart's ' imago dei ', Brekke's advocacy of a single World Church, Molland's account of a Jesuit mission in Denmark in the seventeenth century, and many another will be found summarized here. It is greatly to be hoped that this year's book will soon be brought up-to-date, to effect a greater cross fertilization between the work of Norwegian and foreign scholarship than has hitherto been possible. The price is most moderate, so that it is within the reach of many readers.

H. H. Rowley

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[1] *Die Kindertaufe in den ersten vier Jahrhunderten* [1958]. Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen ; DM. 13·50.

[2] *Heiligen Gräber in Jesu Umwelt (Mt. 23 : 29 ; Lk. 11 : 47) : Eine Untersuchung zur Volksreligion der Zeit Jesu* [1958]. Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen ; DM. 15·80, or bound DM. 19·80.

[3] *Humaniora Norvegica*, Vol. 2 [1958]. Oslo University Press ; 30s.

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Fire and Water

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., Ph.D.,
Alsager, Cheshire

'Others have laboured, and ye are entered into their labour.'—Jn 4^{38} (R.V.).

It isn't always the great events of history which teach us most. For instance, York Minster enshrines the memory of mighty deeds of over a dozen centuries, and reminds us of the priceless heritage of our religion in a thousand ways. Here worked Paulinus, who converted Edwin, the pagan king of Northumbria. Here Alcuin founded one of the very first schools in the land. Here Walter de Gray and John of Thoresby built majestically.

But the enthusiastic guide who showed me round recently had scores of other fascinating things to tell us—little things he had stored up in his memory and which made the story of the centuries wonderfully real. Two of them will stick together in my memory, one about fire, the other about water.

He took us into the beautiful choir and we admired the exquisite woodwork of the screen and canopies and the canons' stalls ornately gilt. He asked us to guess how old it was, and we made all sorts of wrong guesses. 'No', he said with a smile. 'It is all modern. The ancient woodwork of this choir took forty years to carve. But . . ., and he told us how, one night in 1829, a Puritan named Jonathan Martin hid himself in the Minster. He foolishly thought that God could not be worshipped in such beautiful surroundings. So the silly man set light to the magnificent work that had taken years of craftsmen's work to perfect, and the lovely place was all destroyed. He was mad, of course, and they found a place for him in a hospital where he could be looked after.

Then our guide took us to the north transept, towering ninety-nine feet above us with the great Five Sisters' Window letting the light fall upon the magnificent stonework. Someone remarked how fine and clean it looked, the huge blocks of hewn stone rearing one on another to the splendid new roof which has recently been made to replace one in which the beastly death watch beetle had done its worst. 'Yes', said our guide proudly, 'that stonework is very fine, and you see it at its best. Six men have worked six days a week for six years to scrub it by hand, and you see the result of their hard work.'

Jonathan Martin in nine short hours undid the work of ages, and yet we know his name and the date of his ravage. Six men of our decade scrubbed day in, day out for six long years to bring beauty to old stone: but we don't know their names, and I don't suppose any verger in years to come will be able to tell visitors much about them.

There are two things to learn from those curious facts. The first is the truth which Shakespeare made Cassius explain (as you have no doubt had to learn already):

> The evil that men do lives after them,
> The good is oft interred with their bones.

Judas Iscariot must have done some noble deeds in his life, but the only thing we remember about him is something for which he was so ashamed that he killed himself at the very thought of it. And one act of folly, or one unkind jest, or one selfish prank may mar the finest school career which until then had been intent on all the good things. Not only so, but the one evil deed may be remembered when the good is forgotten.

The other thing is that we are indebted more than ever we know to the men who have toiled quietly and long to make life grand for us to live—the Curies and Rosses and Pasteurs who worked on in utter self-denial until Nature yielded her secrets to them to use for the good of others. Good seems to grow more slowly than evil. There are no short cuts to the building of the Kingdom of God: that is what the story of our Lord's temptations in the wilderness teaches us.

We who follow Him must so live that the world is richer for our living. And we must leave no ugly memories which make it harder for others to live.

The Little Boy with the Big Bat

By Rita Snowden, Auckland, New Zealand

Everybody in Len's home loved cricket. Though Mrs. Hutton pretended otherwise when, suddenly, she heard a crash and a ball came through her window. But that didn't happen often.

Len was only a little fellow of nine when his father took him and his brothers and other boys of Pudsey out on to the green. He called it 'a bit of practice'. Mrs. Hutton could never hold them back long enough to eat a decent tea, they were so keen. The hours till dusk were all too

short for the young enthusiasts. There was so much to learn if they were to be good cricketers. And again and again they scrambled their tea, and made off. Usually there were six of them—not enough to divide into sides—so each had a turn with the bat, and stayed in, however long it took, till the others got him out.

Once Len—for all that he was so little that the bat-handle stuck in his middle—stayed in all Monday evening, and all Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and was still at the bat when they broke up on Friday. Never did his playmates allow him to forget it; nor did he forget it himself. It was a kind of promise of 1938—when he would bat for two-and-a-half days at the Oval, and set up the record Test score of three hundred and sixty-four against Australia. That belonged, of course, to the undreamed-of future. Little Len at nine years of age was learning to manage his bat.

Boyhood was full of such summer evenings, when, as dusk gave way to dark, his father called across the green: 'Come on, Len—home to bed'. 'Nay', he would call back, 'give us a bit longer'. 'You've had enough', his father would then call.

But Len could never have enough of cricket. The most exciting sound in the whole world to him was the sound of the ball on the bat. Every spare moment between lessons and work, he filled up with cricket—practising new skills. Soon he saved to buy a splendid bat—of a size that wouldn't stick in his middle.

'He'll be the best cricketer of us all in the end', said his father, as he saw how keen he was and how practice was improving his game. And he was right—Len, grown up, was the best cricketer of them all. And no one was so proud of him as his family and friends of Pudsey, who had played with him between tea and the coming of dusk.

Every moment Len enjoyed—trying always, in England, or Australia, among many fine cricketers, to do everything he could to further the game. There were many fine matches during those years. But the greatest moment of all was when Len—who had once been the little boy on the green at Pudsey—was chosen Captain of all England! And so well did he captain his team that not once in the four glorious years of his captaincy did he lose a series. And our Queen made him a Knight of her Realm—so that now he is called *Sir* Leonard Hutton!

But when Len came to look back, and to tell his story in two fine books (*Cricket Is My Life* and *Just My Story*), it was not only of his family's encouragement with the bat and ball that he thought gladly. 'When I was a boy', he said, 'I was made to go to Sunday School and church every week. Like most boys I was not particularly keen about doing so at the time, *but I have been grateful since to my parents for putting me on the right path*'.

The Christian Year

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Christian Wisdom

By the Reverend John L. Riach, B.D., Edinburgh

'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.'—Pr 9^{10}.

'Be ye therefore wise as serpents.'—Mt 10^{16}.

'The Lord give thee understanding in all things'—2 Ti 2^{7}.

The late Principal Macgregor was once listening to a preacher discoursing on the famous words of Jesus to the penitent thief, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise'. He noted that paradise was a central Islamic conception and that it would not be surprising if the converted thief had belonged to the Muhammadan faith: and this despite the fact that Muhammad did not appear on the human scene until centuries after our Lord! As he listened to this nonsense, the words of Scripture kept running through the Principal's head, 'Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar . . . yet will not his foolishness depart from him'.

This incident reveals that W. Macneile Dixon is perfectly correct when he avers that a man may be a very good Christian and a very great fool, that he may have a Gargantuan appetite for balderdash, or that his follies may bring more misery into the world than his Christianity brings happiness.

But God does not wish the Church of His Son to be stuffed with fools. Did not Jesus tell His apostles when sending them out on their missionary journey to be as wise as serpents? Does not Paul, in letter after letter, inform his readers that he never allows a day to pass without praying for them, and that part of his prayer is that God will make them wise? We members of the Christian Church should be the wisest people in the world. Perhaps, but what is wisdom? It must never be confused with cleverness. It is in these three verses we get the clue to the various senses in which all of us in the Church should be wise people.

1. First, we should be wise in the sense of having an intimate knowledge of God and His ways.

There is the oft recorded instance of R. L. Stevenson encountering a country yokel cleaning out a byre. When he asked him if he never tired of his messy job, back came the reply: 'He

that has aye something ayont need never weary'. There was a man who knew nothing of the classics or modern languages. He had no schooling in the dialectics of the philosophers. Modern science, which is so venerated in our time, was a closed book to him. He was entirely unskilled in the technique of making a fortune by astute advertising. Two things only he knew—the Bible and the Catechism. God and His ways were the only real knowledge he could lay claim to. Yet, that, after all, is the knowledge that matters: for it is the only thing which can see us through the big crises of human life. If you have all the gear this world can give, yet your child, despite a good example, turns prodigal, breaks your heart and compels you to ask, what is the purpose of life; if you have the responsibility of restoring the will to live in someone who has been sorely stricken with bereavement, if you are suddenly seized with a crippling illness and wonder how you are going to bear it—one thing, and one thing only, will help in such an hour. It is not the dish of human platitudes men so often in their well-meaning stupidity proffer for our comfort, but a knowledge of God and His ways. That is the kind of wisdom towards which the writer of the Proverbs is pointing us all when he says, 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding'.

2. Second, all of us in the Church should be wise in the sense of being able to handle the practical problems of daily living which keep cropping up.

Monica Baldwin, at an early age, entered a convent to dedicate herself to the religious life. It took her thirty years to discover that she was unsuited to this rigorous calling, and through a special Papal dispensation she returned to this world. Read her experiences of trying to live in a world which had been revolutionized during her withdrawal from it and you find she was incapable of coping with the simplest things in daily life. The doing of the easiest of unskilled jobs, taking a train from one place to another, finding suitable lodgings, were tasks which teenagers could do yet were quite beyond her.

Many intellectual people in the world are like that. They can think deeply, talk brilliantly, write like Charles Lamb, but they are what we often call 'handless'. The simplest practical problems we all encounter in the task of daily living completely defeat them. But, others there are, who are opposites. They may have no great intellectual ability; but, when they encounter any practical problem they are, like Barrie's Admirable Crichton on the desert island, never at a loss what to do.

This was the wisdom Jesus wished of His disciples. The Twelve were not the twelve best intellects in Palestine. Setting out in their raw state on their first effort at Christian evangelism they were bound to meet all sorts of practical problems. The wisdom that could handle these with competent ease was something they must acquire.

3. Third, the followers of Christ should be wise in the sense of being able to make sound judgments.

All of us are born with a critical faculty. Like every other gift we can put it to a good use or an evil use, just as we care. Many, alas, employ it only in the devilish pastime of tearing the reputations of their fellow-men to ribbons in the most uncharitable fashion. It can, however, be put to a nobler purpose—that of assessing all the factors in a situation and coming to a sound judgment concerning it, as did the prophets of the Old Testament in their critical times. Who in our generation will forget the Munich crisis, when Neville Chamberlain returned from that city with his pathetic piece of paper signed by Hitler and said it meant peace in our time? The very next week a fraternal of six ministers met in an Ayrshire manse. One of their number had read everything on Nazi Germany he could lay his hands on, and in a fascinating talk he prophesied the rape of Czechoslovakia and the invasion of Poland. 'The Prime Minister prophesies peace in our time. I prophesy war in a year.' And the minister was right.

This ability to see every aspect of a situation, to use the critical faculty, and to come to a sound judgment concerning it is a wisdom of the highest importance. Paul knew that. Having left young Timothy in charge of one of the most strategic churches in Asia Minor, he was well aware that if he was to give a lead in all big issues it was wisdom of this kind the youth must set about acquiring. That is his prayer for Timothy when he remembers him daily before the throne of grace. For Christian wisdom in every sense is the gift of God to us men. He does impart it to us, provided we desire it and ask for it.

For the past three years I have spent my summer holiday in a lovely part of the north-west Highlands. Every croft is now open to me. To begin with this shy people appeared an unlettered lot, but once one found entrance to their homes, and sat talking by the peat fire, one discovered how hasty and wrong had been his first judgment. In one cottage was a forester who read the English classics o'nights; in another a roadman whose bookcase contained well thumbed religious volumes; in another a lobster fisherman whose choice from the travelling library was not childish Westerns, but books on philosophy and psychology. None was an original thinker. None will ever

write a book. Yet, I question if I have ever encountered wiser people. Their knowledge of God and His ways, their ability to deal with all the practical problems in their hard surroundings, their sound judgment on important issues made one stand in admiration. That is God's will for His Son's Church. Not to be stuffed with the fools of the earth—but to be filled with people who are wise with the wisdom Christ can give them.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Transfiguration

BY THE REVEREND DOUGLAS STEWART, M.A., LONDON

'And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.'—Mk 9^2.

1. At this point in the Gospel narrative there is a shift of focus—or, in television terms, a switch from camera one to camera two—which, until it is observed, turns the Transfiguration into a problem story. Until now we have been on camera one which is focused on Jesus alone. We watch His baptism, His temptations, the opening of His ministry, His call to the disciples. Other people are in the picture, of course, but its centre is Christ. The baptism, temptations, and ministry have their unity in His spiritual experience.

But immediately before the Transfiguration comes the story of the great confession, 'Thou art the Christ', and at that point camera two comes into operation. It is focused on Christ and His disciples. Peter and the others become of central importance, and, indeed, the Transfiguration is not a story primarily told about Jesus. It is about Peter and James and John. Their experience, their emotions, their words are recorded, not Jesus' words. And in the climax the word of God comes to them. At the baptism the word came to Jesus 'Thou art my son'. At the Transfiguration the word comes to the disciples 'This is my son'.

We make the Transfiguration a problem story by trying to fit it to the spiritual pilgrimage of our Lord, but it becomes luminous to us when we read it instead as a part of the spiritual pilgrimage of Peter, James and John.

2. These men were not called from a spiritual vacuum to follow Christ. They had a great religion—the religion of the living God revealed to man in the law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah). When Peter said, 'Thou art the Christ', immediately there opened for all of them the question of relationship of past with present which we recognize in the Acts and the Epistles but not so readily in the Gospels. If God is the living God speaking in the law and the prophets, how is Christ related to that past revelation?

And so Jesus takes them into the living past. Notice how every detail in the story mirrors the Old Testament: 'six days', 'an high mountain', 'apart', 'the cloud', 'the voice'. And here Moses and Elijah appear before them with Jesus. They confront their problem.

That it is a problem emerges from Peter's schizophrenic solution, 'Let us make three tabernacles: one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah'. They cannot yet relate the living past to the living present. And then comes the word of revelation, 'This is my beloved Son: hear him.'

'And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.'

Peter and James and John passed in the Transfiguration experience through the same kind of crisis as Paul met on the Damascus road and were led to an analogous solution. They discovered Christ as 'the fulfilment' of the law and the prophets.

3. There is a sense in which no great religious word can be understood until it is fulfilled. Moses and Elijah cannot be understood except in Christ. The Old Testament can only be read in the light of the New.

Take the Exodus. Is it so great an event historically? Do we feel that modern conflicts of Jews and Egyptians contain a Divine revelation? In human terms the Exodus was a small event. The Jews saw in it the hand of God and to that extent enlarged it. But we see it as the Platonic shadow of the salvation of mankind in Jesus Christ. All mankind endures sore bondage and misery. All mankind serves in Egypt. In Christ mankind moves out—and Paul boldly speaks of the crossing of the sea as their 'baptism' into Moses. The Exodus is the promise and the prophecy of the great Exodus of humanity from despair to hope in Christ.

The Transfiguration, therefore, was crucial for Peter and James and John. It took them beyond Judaism to its fulfilment.

4. But we are Christians. We begin where they left off. We believe that Moses and Elijah are the promise fulfilled in Christ. What have we to learn from all this?

This. The danger of a true revelation which has become a way of death because it is static. The danger of religious experience which becomes false because it is never fulfilled.

'I've been converted'. 'I've been confirmed'. 'I've been baptized'. These are all in the past

tense. They mark, like milestones, great moments when the living God confronted our souls. So often they are not milestones but tombstones. They mark, not our way, but our end. Who ever had such a conversion as St. Paul? Yet he nowhere writes 'I've been converted'. He says, 'I live, yet not I, Christ liveth in me'.

William Blake wrote:

The cistern contains: the fountain overflows.
. . . . .
Expect poison from the standing water.

The Church is full of cisterns. People who had a religious experience: who contain a religious past. But the waters no longer spring up within them as in a fountain. Their religion is poisoned and poisonous.

Had Peter, James and John been asked, before the event, if they knew Christ, they would have boasted of their knowledge. They had left all and followed. They had heard His word and seen His mighty acts. They had been with Him day and night. They knew Him. Yet on the mountain they discovered that they had not known. 'He was transfigured before them.'

Do you know Christ? We all know Christ—as childhood's friend—as youth's ideal—as manhood's pattern—as Truth—as Way. Yet we don't know Christ because in a living life there is always a future—a transfiguration. Christ in maturity is far beyond the Christ of childhood.

They hated and feared the mountain—loneliness and mist. We hate and fear all life's deeper experiences and especially death—loneliness and mist. Yet in that hour of fear we begin to see Jesus as He is.

The rending veil shall Thee reveal
All glorious as Thou art.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Christ for Every Man

BY THE REVEREND JAMES MARTIN, B.D., GLASGOW

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.'—Lk 19^{10}.

'They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.'—Lk 5^{31}.

'If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.'—Jn 8^{36}.

'Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.'—2 Co 8^{9}.

'We have passed from death unto life.'—1 Jn 3^{14}.

Somewhere in Europe there used to be an old covered bridge on which, at twelve different points, stood twelve different images of Jesus, each representing Him in a different capacity, one as Jesus the Shepherd, another as Jesus the Physician, and so on. And as travellers crossed that bridge, each would stop for a moment in silent worship before the figure that spoke most to his own particular need. It was a beautiful thought that created the symbolism of that bridge—and a true one, for Jesus is able to meet the deepest needs of us all, however diverse and however great. I draw attention to five aspects of Jesus the Saviour chosen quite arbitrarily out of the infinite variety of ways in which He is accustomed to minister His grace to men.

1. 'The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.' Jesus brings salvation to the lost by finding and restoring them; and there are many lost folk in this world of ours to-day. They are utterly bewildered by the maze of world events and general godlessness and abandonment of moral standards of the time. They do not know where they are or where they are going; they have little sense of God and still less of His love; and feel themselves, perhaps, to be set in a world where everything is dark and hostile and full of hurt and there is room for nothing save hopelessness and dark despair.

Jesus comes to deliver these people from their lostness and this He does first of all by revealing to them just how lost they are, by showing them God and how far they have wandered away from Him. Then He restores them to the proper path, if they will consent to go with Him; and He lets them see where they are going and that God goes with them. He delivers them from helplessness and hopelessness and adds purpose to their lives.

2. 'They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.' Jesus came to make sick men well again and He does so still. Many times when He trod this earth He healed the physical ailments of those who sought His aid and even yet, as of old, such miracles are being performed, and sick people prayed for in Jesus' name are made well again. It is true that there is much mystery here. Such prayers do not always issue in healing. But sometimes they do, which means that we have not done all we might for any sick friend until and unless we have held him up before the throne of grace.

But Jesus performed on earth greater miracles of healing even than the healing of sick bodies. He healed also sick lives and sick souls; and still this healing work goes on. Jesus is the great Physician and, whatever our ailment of heart or of spirit, He can make us well—and shall, if we will consult Him and will accept His diagnosis and will follow His prescription.

3. 'If the Son therefore shall make you free,

ye shall be free indeed.' Jesus gives liberty to the enslaved. Those who are in bondage, in bondage to sin or to circumstance or to environment, in bondage to pain or to sickness or to sadness, those who are in bondage—and many are bound to-day, whether by large chains or by small ones—Jesus makes free.

True, the freedom Jesus gives has a paradoxical appearance. It looks for all the world like another and a more complete enslavement and, indeed, it is just that. It means accepting the shackles of Christ's service and becoming in the completest sense His liege-man. And yet it is in this that real freedom is achieved. The willing acceptance of the captivity of Christ delivers us from all those lesser captivities that militate against true freedom.

Make me a captive, Lord,
And then I shall be free;
Force me to render up my sword,
And I shall conqueror be.

4. 'Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.' Upon those who are poor Jesus bestows wealth—not, indeed, wealth in the form of a substantial balance in the bank, but wealth in the form of those spiritual riches which are beyond price. Real wealth, after all, is never to be measured in terms of money; and it is real wealth that Jesus gives, such as He bestowed, for instance, upon St. Francis, who scarcely ever possessed a penny piece which he could call his own and yet of whom Dick Sheppard said, 'The rock-bottom truth about St. Francis was not that he was poor, but, that having nothing, he possessed all things'.

From one point of view St. Francis was desperately poor, from another he was extremely rich, much as it was with Jesus Himself.

My Master was so very poor,
A manger was His cradling place;
So very rich my Master was
Kings came from far to gain His grace.

My Master was so very poor,
And with the poor He brake the bread;
So very rich my Master was
That multitudes by Him were fed.

My Master was so very poor,
They nailed Him naked to a Cross;
So very rich my Master was
He gave His all, and knew no loss.

And this same Jesus who made Himself poor can make us richer than kings.

5. 'We have passed from death unto life.' Jesus comes upon those who are dead and brings them alive. Once or twice He did this literally and physically when He was on earth. But more important, and even more wonderful, He did it innumerable times in a spiritual way. He took men and women who were dead or all but dead spiritually, who were existing but not really alive, who were breathing but unaware of what real life was, and touched them into life. And this same miracle is one which He is performing every day still, every time, indeed, that any man makes up his mind to be His.

History tells that originally the Eskimos belonged to Europe. But they made a great migration, some terrible catastrophe cut them off and there they have been ever since, shut away in the bleak northern wastes, making do with a meagre kind of existence which comes far short of that fuller life which might have been theirs to enjoy in Europe with its art and its music and its literature and a host of other riches.

After some such fashion in the childhood of the race, man decided to fling away from God's green pastures and struck out into the North—and could not return. Sin drove a wedge between man and God and formed a barrier that remained unbridgeable until Jesus bridged it with His own body and blood. But now He can lead us back to God and to life, if we are willing to follow.

Knowing little or nothing of the splendours they were missing, the Eskimos, no doubt, have been quite content with the way of life they knew. Some of us, perhaps, knowing little of what we miss, are quite content to go on existing without the difference that Jesus could make. But if we will make the leap of faith and pay the homage of service, Jesus shall give us life and give it to the full.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

In His Will Is Our Peace

BY THE REVEREND DAVID N. FRANCIS, M.A., LONDON

'In His will is our peace.' That sentence has a New Testament ring about it. Yet it comes, not from the first century but from the thirteenth; not from Paul but from Dante. Even so, it is an inspired word.

Our subject is *peace*. Not peace between nations or between people. No; the theme is *inner* peace, serenity within. Many would call it Peace of Mind, but it goes further back than that. It is really a Peace of Soul; and when it is there, the mind—yes, and the body too—will also be at peace.

This inner peace is one of to-day's greatest needs. I remember an old man whom I used to visit in the Potteries. He was very ill; he was

also tragically estranged from his family—and the two things were intimately related. He would sit up in bed and cry tensely 'I *must* have peace!' That man typifies many. The inside of many a human mind is like Piccadilly Circus Tube Station at the rush hour, filled with a multitude of fretful, fussy thoughts, rushing hither and thither they scarce know where. Our minds are very busy, but they are not at peace.

Our record in public health to-day illustrates this. Behind innumerable 'physical' ailments lies some conflict, stress or fear, buried deep in the mind but giving it no peace. There is a growing need not just for medicines but for those who can read and remedy our anxious souls. Till then not just our prisons but our mental hospitals are full; and ours is a strained and tense community, full of nameless fears.

It is ironic that such a community should possess a 'civilization' which is so competent and accomplished. The graph of scientific progress, which tended to move up sharply just over a century ago, is now rocketting almost vertically. Radio, television and radar; jet-propulsion in aviation; chemistry in industry (we are told that the development of plastics alone is ushering in as big a revolution as came with the harnessing of steam); atomic and nuclear energy; electronics and automation—we are richer far than any previous generation in knowledge and mastery, and in our material possessions. And yet . . . ? And yet always there seems to be a Voice whispering: 'One thing thou lackest!'

Look East and West, and you will find stronger evidences of the same lack. Look West, to the wealthiest country in the world, the U.S.A. Or look at Sweden, the most socially-progressive country in the world and you will find still strong evidence of the same lack. Her standard of living has been greatly improved, and her social services are exemplary. Real poverty and economic need are almost unknown. In a radio talk we were told of the wonders of a most modern satellite town outside Stockholm, an achievement almost dream-like in its technical perfection. And yet the commentator found it in some ways an empty achievement. For within this enviable setting he had discovered people as neurotic and ill-at-ease as any over here. He closed his talk with the sober comment that suicides in Sweden passed the total for fatal road accidents.

Here, then, is our modern dilemma. Though we are provided with so much, our greatest need is something else; and rich though we may be, we should be content with much less, if only we could have a mind at peace within itself. Yet it is just here that our civilization falls down. It can never satisfy this longing because it is ignoring vital things. Isaiah was right: 'There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked'. And by 'wicked' He did not just mean, for example, murderers and adulterers, but all who turn from the light that they see, who will not face the whole truth, and who in pride, accept no greater authority than themselves. They are choosing an unnatural way, and it cannot bring an easy mind.

There is only one road, one royal road, to inner peace. Paradoxically, it does not come by being sought, as by America to-day. It comes when we cease looking for it, and begin looking most ardently for *God* instead; when we are ready to accept Him as the biggest Factor in our situation, when we seek an encounter with Him, and when we desire beyond all else to be right with Him. And until then, until we are willing to fit in with Him, and with His plan for us, we are bound to be ill at ease. In fact, that is one of God's ways of speaking to us. 'We were made for God', as Augustine reminds us, 'and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Him.' Our hearts *are* restless, they are bound to be restless, so long as we are 'out of our element'. We find our rest finally, and only, in Him, in the glad acceptance of what He is and what He desires for us. And this is where Dante's word becomes so relevant. '*In His will* is our peace'; that is, it is when we seek and desire and obey whatever God may want that our minds become truly rested.

I know the truth of this, in my own experience. So often in life I have come to a fork in the road, with two or more alternatives before me. I have not known what to do. Even when I have been aware of my own desires, I have not always been aware of God's. And then, perhaps, driven to my knees, I have prayed, something like this: 'Father, I want to do *what You want*. You know what *I* have wanted. But now, that doesn't matter. Show me Your will, and I will accept and do it. I want whatever You want.' And when I have been able thus to make God's will my goal and my bond, then, sure enough, His peace has quietly flowed into me and over me.

It is not always necessary to *know* God's will; often we don't. It is enough that we should most of all desire it and constantly be seeking it. Then indeed shall we join the few people soon distinguishable in this hurrying and harried world who are tranquil within. Such folk are not necessarily the most quick or clever. They may not travel so fast as their fellows. Yet in the end they are most likely to arrive. As Thoreau says: 'If a man does not happen to keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears the sound of a different drum. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.' And

the music which we can hear is the music of our Master's will for us.

So we reach our twin conclusions. The first is that *if we do God's will we have His peace.*

But the truth complementary to this is equally important. It is also a safe deduction that *if we have His peace we are doing His will.* In other words, if we would know whether we are living in line with God's plan for us, then the presence (or absence) of His inner peace should be a fairly faithful index and guide. You will remember Paul's word to the Colossians : ' Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts '. In the R.V. margin the (better) verb suggested is ' arbitrate '. Let the peace of God *arbitrate,* be a judging and deciding factor, in your hearts ! When a man is contemplating descending into a disused well or pitshaft where the air may be foul and dangerous, he first lowers into the shaft a lighted candle. Its flame is his guide. If it flickers and goes out he knows that that way is not for him. But if the flame burns on, clear and steady, he knows that all is well. God's inner peace can guide us in just that way. When it is strangely disturbed and seems to desert us we are being warned. This way lies danger. But when His peace is strong and steady within us, we may dare to believe that our feet are upon His highway.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Spiritual Insight

BY THE VERY REVEREND GEORGE JOHNSTONE JEFFREY, D.D., GLASGOW

' He that is spiritual judgeth all things.'—1 Co 2^{15}.
' The spiritual man has an insight into the meaning of everything ' (Phillips).

God has the first word with man—and the last. When He fashioned His creatures He left an aching void at the core of their being and so staked His claim to their dependence to all eternity. Made as we are, life is always tossing us back on the breast of the Almighty. And by the same token, God has always the *last* word with us. When all human valuations have been passed on character, when earthly judgments have been pronounced on any situation, there remains God's estimate, God's verdict, and there is no appeal from it. ' He that is spiritual judgeth all things.' And this divine manner of evaluating life God passes on to His children in ever greater measure as they go down the years. ' The spiritual man has an insight into the meaning of everything.'

Let us consider the difference between natural and spiritual judgments as we find them in three common categories of life.

First there is the concept of *Time.* As long as we have trains to catch and appointments to keep we depend on our watches and clocks. But we are living a shallow life if we do not see that this is but a clumsy way of dividing time as if each portion of a day, its minutes and hours, were in any real and deep sense the equal of any other. In sheer intensity of living an hour can be like a year. The real import of any period of time is measured by the amount it contains of the soul's experience. Masefield did not exaggerate when he wrote

Life's an affair of instants, spun to years.

To take an outstanding example of this, there is that blinding moment on the Damascus way. In one flash the whole history of mankind was changed, so big was that moment with destiny for the nations. ' The spiritual man has an insight into the meaning of everything.' No two periods of time are equal. An hour crowded with life is worth long months of spiritual stagnation. Truly

We live in deeds, not years ; in thoughts, not breaths ;
In feelings ; not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs, He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

All this has a bearing on the problem of the mystery of the brevity or the longevity of human existence. The War brought this home continually to our hearts and bosoms. Thousands of youths died in their late teens and early twenties. Had they lived to be eighty would they have put into life as much of the stuff of the soul as they did in their brief term of years ? Judged by earthly reckoning the life of our Lord Himself seems a broken fragment. Did *He* think so ? Were not His last words ' It is finished ' ? The divine task He came into the world to accomplish He carried to its triumphant conclusion. What if at the end of the day this supernatural way of measuring the true worth of a human life will flash on our consciousness ? The natural category of time will fade before a diviner and higher conception. ' He that is spiritual has an insight into the meaning of everything.' And this insight should bring with it a deep, abiding serenity, so that we can murmur

Our times are in His hand
Who saith ' A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half ; trust God : see all nor be afraid ! '

Then there is the category of *Space*, of distance. Scientists in these breath-taking days have all but annihilated distance. They are continually seeking new worlds to conquer. But the spiritual man has banished the idea of space long ago. Mere physical contact may mean and does mean very little in life. The greater part of each day may be spent in the company of a fellow-man in business and yet as far as real fellowship is concerned you might be living on a different planet. The tragedy of an ill-assorted marriage is that husband and wife may go on for years together in the same home and have discovered that their ideas of the great and the small, the passing and the abiding, the tinsel and the fine gold of life are in constant, unbearable, contradiction. Mere physical propinquity may be life's supreme irony. On the other hand what is a truly united Christian home ? I visited one such in one of my congregations. Several of the family were shaping their careers abroad. Yet what the mother said of one could have been said of them all. 'Since he left us three years ago, David has never missed a mail or forgotten a birthday.' 'He that is spiritual has an insight into the meaning of things.'

All this bears on a problem that troubles many people, namely, the space and time that seem to divide them from Christ Himself. To such folks Christ is no more than a dim Figure receding into the mists of the centuries. They wail

> Dim tracts of time divide
> Those golden days from me ;
> Thy voice comes strange o'er years of change ;
> How can we follow Thee ?
>
> Comes faint and far Thy voice
> From vales of Galilee ;
> Thy vision fades in ancient shades ;
> How should we follow Thee ?

The Christian answer to this sombre outlook is to trust the intuitions of our best dreams and doings and assert that if we have not vital dealings every day with the living, loving Christ, then there is nothing true for us in heaven or on earth. Jesus has annihilated for us for ever the barriers of time and space. 'For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy ; I dwell in the high and holy place, *with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.*'

Lastly there is the concept of *success and happiness*. As regards material success let us clear our minds of cant. From Genesis to Revelation I can find nothing to substantiate the idea that God has any quarrel with a man's honourable success. His one concern is that success and pleasure should be real things. At the end of the day when many that are first shall be last and the last first, God's verdict on many a man's career is going to be a very grim affair. It was on a human life that was bulging with material success that His Son pronounced the brief, blistering epitaph 'Thou fool'. And as regards happiness there is a world of significance in that word of Scripture 'The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, *and he addeth no sorrow with it*', no wretched hangover the next day that makes a man despise himself.

> And, e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
> The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy.

We all have our wistful moments when we know that the final criterion of success and happiness must always be a spiritual one. Hence, in the words of that loveliest of Collects, we must pray that 'our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found'. The truly spiritual man can contemplate the most glamorous earthly success without the least suspicion of jealousy. He has learned to sing

> Saviour, if of Zion's city
> I, through grace, a member am,
> Let the world deride or pity,
> I will glory in Thy Name.
> Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
> All his boasted pomp and show ;
> Solid joys and lasting treasure
> None but Zion's children know.

To be able to sing this from the heart is—to be a Christian.

Entre Nous

The Lips of Dying Men

One cannot but handle with reverence a book the most important part of which was written by a man of fifty-six who has been told that he is dying of an inoperable and incurable cancer, and that he has only a matter of months to live. Such a book is *Facing Life and Death : A Volume in Commemoration of the late Rev. Leslie J. Tizard, B.A., B.D., B.Litt.*, edited by the Rev. Harry Guntrip, B.D., Ph.D. (Allen and Unwin ; 16s. net).

This book has three main parts. There is a brief biographical introduction by the editor, and a brief and very lovely study of Leslie Tizard as

minister and preacher, by T. W. Rumsby, M.A., one of Leslie Tizard's deacons. There is a selection of thirteen notable sermons by Leslie Tizard. And, finally, there is Leslie Tizard's own manuscript written during the last four months of his life, when he was under sentence of death. It is obvious that the last section of this book is the most valuable of all.

Leslie Tizard was minister of Carrs Lane Church, Birmingham, and there he walked in the great succession of John Angell James, Dr. Dale, Dr. Jowett, Dr. Sidney Berry, Leyton Richards. Mr. Rumsby takes two phrases which are commonly used of a preacher. The congregation in the old phrase 'sits under the preacher', and the preacher 'ascends to his altitudes'. The great thing about Leslie Tizard's preaching was that when he 'ascended to his altitudes' he never became unintelligible to the people below and he never lost his identity with them.

One of his great qualities was this quality of identification. Mr. Rumsby says of him that he had a skill which enabled him 'to take the words out of our mouths, the experiences out of our lives and the thoughts out of our hearts and present them as his own as well as ours'. Leslie Tizard himself remembers someone's phrase, 'the horror of immunity', and he says of his own experience at the end: 'That is why this experience which has come to me now seems an initiation'.

It is moving to hear a dying preacher's verdicts on preaching. Leslie Tizard remembered L. P. Jacks' warning that 'every preacher should ask himself now and again how far he is preaching what he really believes, and how far what he wants others to believe'. He remembered George Eliot's saying about Savonarola, that he had sometimes to speak by virtue of yesterday's faith hoping it would come back to-morrow. He remembered a saying of J. B. Priestley that people get a bit sick of having the front of their minds tickled, and that they want something which goes deeper.

During these days Leslie Tizard had no theological problems. He was not afraid of dying; what did cause him regret was giving up living. 'I did not believe that the God of love about whom I had so often preached had *sent* this thing upon me, but I did believe that, if I made my renunciation into His Hands, He would help me to make something even of pain and loss. And with the realization of it came peace.' They brought him a televison set to keep him 'from being bored'. He remarks: 'I haven't time to be bored now! Boredom is only for those who have (or think they have) more time than they know what to do with. When you know the supply is limited, as Paul said, you buy it up.'

It is obvious that in a condition like Leslie Tizard's a man is driven back on the essentials. He remembered the title of a book by a certain eighteenth century bishop called Bishop Hall—*De Paucitate Credendorum*, 'on the fewness of the things that must be believed', and he found what he calls the 'most succinct summary of the Christian gospel ever achieved' in the sentence of Paul: 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself'.

The problem of why such a thing should happen to such a man must have come also to Leslie Tizard, and he solved it with his characteristic insistence on the necessity of identification. 'As it seems to me, injury or death in an air crash, or an attack by virus or cancer cell, happens quite indiscriminately to bad and good, to those who are wasting their lives and those who are living every moment with absorbing purpose, to those who are parasites and those who are making a useful contribution to the common life. Would you have it otherwise? Life would be a poorer and meaner thing if respectable living, or even genuine goodness, which is a different thing, could purchase immunity.' A man might start a theology of the Incarnation from just there.

As one lays down this book two things remain in the memory. There is the picture of a man who in face of death could laugh and still delight in a good story. And there is the picture of courage. Leslie Tizard quotes a passage from *The Life of Henry Suso written by Himself*. The Servitor, for whom life had been easy, met the comely youth in brave attire, and asked him who and what he was. 'I am a squire-errant', said the youth, 'and I bring the gentlemen together that they may tilt and feast and fight and pay homage to the ladies.' The Servitor asked: 'Tell me, if a man were only brave at the first onset, would that be enough?' 'No', was the reply, 'he must remain firm to the end of the tournament, and though the blows which he receives bring sparks of fire into his eyes and make the blood flow from his face, he must endure them all, if he is to obtain the glory of victory.'

Leslie Tizard remained firm to the end of the tournament; and we thank God that he shared these last days with those of us who never knew him.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

Printed in Scotland by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to THE EDITOR, King's Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.